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# Little White Lies

Truth & Mystery

carlos





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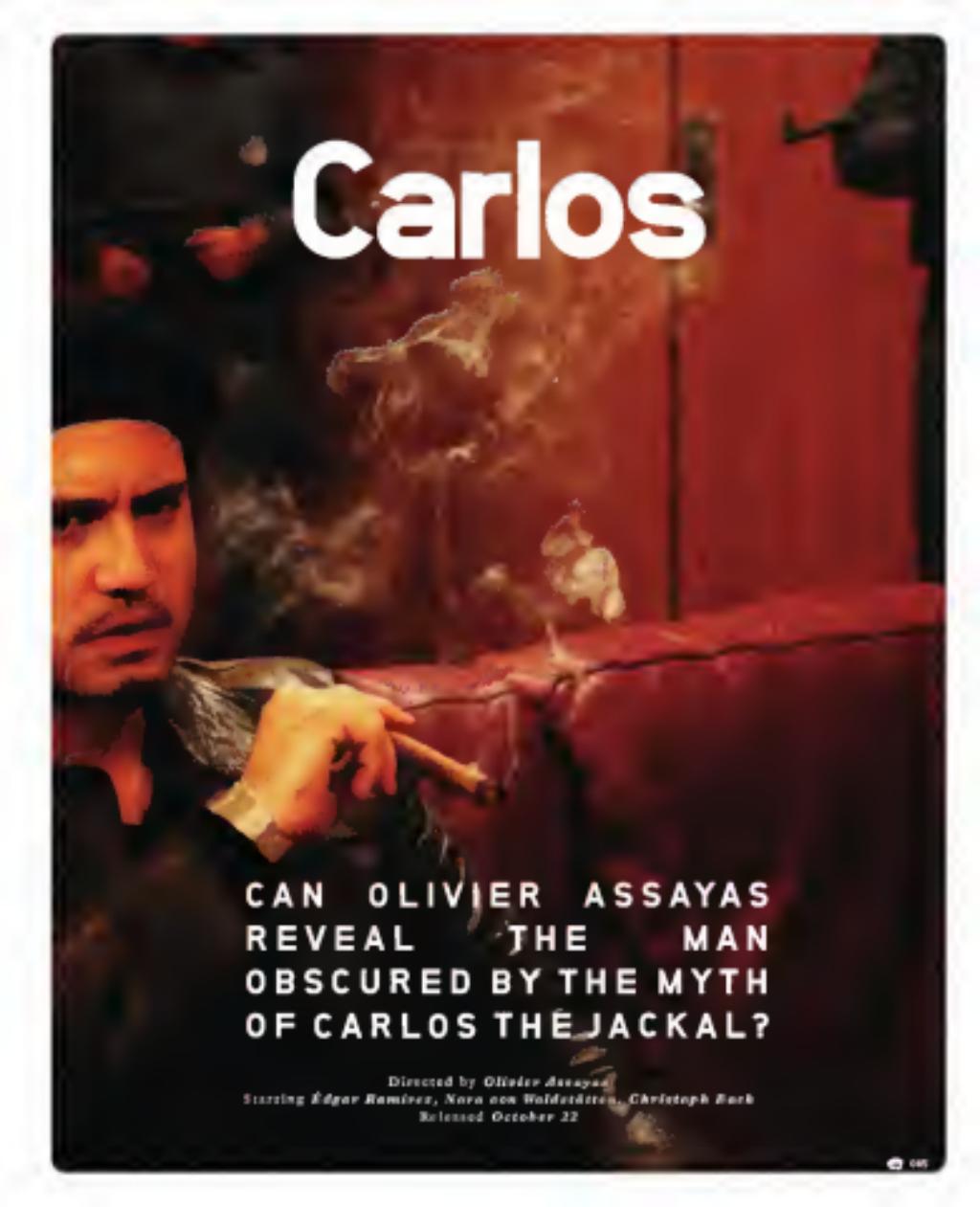
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# Carlos

A movie poster for the film 'Carlos'. The image is dominated by a large, white, serif font spelling out the name 'Carlos'. In the background, a man with a mustache and dark hair, wearing a dark suit, is shown from the chest up, looking intensely at the viewer. He is holding a lit cigarette in his right hand. Behind him is a large, dark lion standing on a rocky outcrop. The setting appears to be a jungle or a rocky landscape at night or in low light. The overall mood is mysterious and dramatic.

CAN OLIVIER ASSAYAS  
REVEAL THE MAN  
OBSCURED BY THE MYTH  
OF CARLOS THE JACKAL?

Directed by Olivier Assayas  
Starring Edgar Ramírez, Nana Visitor, Christoph Waltz  
Released October 22

A close-up, low-key photograph of a man and a woman in an intimate embrace. The man's face is hidden behind the woman's dark hair. The woman has her eyes closed and is wearing a dark, patterned top. The lighting is dramatic, with strong shadows and a reddish tint.

"THIS IS THE STORY  
OF THE MAN WHO  
FOUND HIMSELF AT  
THE INTERSECTION  
OF HISTORY, WHEN  
THE FUTURE WAS  
BALANCED ON THE  
SCALES OF POWER  
AND POSSIBILITY."



he history of left-wing radicalism is being written by the vanquished. It's the story of a deflated generation pieced together from prison cells and safe houses. It's a fractured narrative of violence and peace, resistance and revolution. It's compelling, seductive and dangerous. In truth, it's many different stories entangled in a complex web of agendas and ideologies. But at the centre is the gravitational influence of Ilich Ramon Bachelet, better known as Carlos the Jackal.

Born into a communist family in Chile and originally named in honour of Lenin, Carlos was an sternest child. He was educated at the London School of Economics and trained in guerrilla warfare in Cuba. He claimed to have joined the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine in 1970, and spent the next quarter of a century engaged in an urban campaign against capitalism, Zionism and western imperialism, turning Europe into a proxy battleground for the Middle East.

Carlos and his associates bombed newspaper offices in Paris and banks in London. They attacked the French embassy in West Berlin and fired rockets at Israeli planes in Cody, Oklahoma and at GPEC, the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries – in Vienna in December 1972 that saw Carlos turn terrorist into political detainee. Leading a gang of six PFLP militants, he took 60 hostages, commanded the Austrian television networks and eventually flew to safety in Tripoli. After Vienna, Carlos the Jackal was no longer a terrorist – he was a star.

So it's telling that *Oliver Assayas'* muscular biography should sustain itself on his first name only. This isn't the story of the mythologized folk hero. This is the story of the man who found himself at the intersection of history, where the future was balanced on the scales of power and possibility.

*Assayas* is attempting to construct, if not impart, a sort of self-awareness. The film opens with a title card acknowledging that much of Carlos' life remains a mystery. The director has filled in the gaps with an imaginative account of history, following Carlos on his journey through the radical underground from Europe to Palestine, Libya, Iraq, Lebanon, South Africa, Jordan, ➤

Venice, Algiers and Sétif. Here he carries paths with a bewildering array of political figures and intelligence officers as he gradually evolves from a covert operative to a political renouncer after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the defeat of global communism.

By necessity rather than design, the story of *Carlos* is a shaggy history of the Cold War. It's a monumental undertaking for a filmmaker, one that Anayas originally deemed too big for cinema. This 164-minute theatrical cut is just a taste of the five-and-a-half-hour version that ran on French TV and closed the Cannes Film Festival in May. And although a comment enough detail to fill an entire paper on international relations, the film does show how well it helps us keep track of names, dates and places that would otherwise become confusing (and economically do sooper). But the

## "ASSAYAS CAN'T HELP BUT ASSEMBLE THE FILM WITH A MECHANISTIC QUALITY."

repeated tactic of fading to black between scenes creates the impression that Anayas—alongside editor Liza Tarbuck and Marion Mazzatorta—has simply dumped his remnants of the film onto a cutting room floor.

What we're left with is a biopic that provides a notable contrast to other films that revile the era. Though *Carlos* can't help but essence a certain radical edge—all whiskey, cognac, leather jackets and subversives—it avoids the grandiose glorification of Uli Edel's *The Baader Meinhof Complex*, a film that was unapologetically anarchist, pure and idealistic. But if Anayas offers the more serious interpretation of the revolutionary impulse, directly addressing the seductive qualities of the terrorist lifestyle, "to brush against danger but never touch it," as *Carlos* puts it, his film also suffers for it. *Carlos* lacks the energy and charisma that informed

Jean-François Reicher's *Martine*—a film that shunned the context to focus relentlessly on character.

Part of that can be attributed to the fact that there's simply too much plot to narrate. We join *Carlos* in his early days in Paris, the committed soldier whose idea of glory lies "in the duty accomplished in silence, for the sole satisfaction of seeing in total agreement with our conscience, working for a universal cause." We see him fall for the first time, murdering two French agents and a Lebanese informant in cold blood. We follow him to the Yezzen training camps of the PFLP and from there across the world and back, through the OPDC, specifically to Saddam's Iraq to the frightened, failed days shooting back and forth across an unwilling Middle East. But Anayas can't help but assemble the film with a mechanicality. ♦





quality – at times it feels more like a lecture than a living, breathing piece of cinema.

An over-taught narrative is the inevitable by-product of the film's moving from small screen to large. More problematic is the issue of Venezuelan actor Edgar Ramírez as the pivotal role of Carlos himself. Despite his impressive physicality, gaining and losing weight dramatically to embody Carlos' narcissism and the uneasy mingling of sex and violence that defined him as a character, Ramírez simply isn't magnetic enough to drag you with him through the long stretches where introspection and exposition take the plot of action. For all his commitment, Ramírez is no Vincent Cassel.

And yet there's an awful lot to admire about *Carlos*. At its best, it possesses a clarity and intensity that lend the film an unconventional edge. The OPIC and its particular narrative both the cynicism and the brutality that underpinned so much of the radical left's rhetoric about freedom and justice. These were local verities played out on a global scale, with a cellophane shrouded for the value of human life. And yet there's something about the era that seems almost quaint in hindsight. "I'm a soldier, not a strategy," says Carlos in a tribute to his PFLP handlers that has an ominous resonance.

In the end, Carlos became a role of history. He had been a tool, silenced for his usefulness but blended by history. As reflected in Ramírez's tired eyes,

his face could almost be tragic but for the destruction he left behind – and the destruction he might have caused had he been free to see the resonance of Miami's tomorrow.

Amaya has created a biopic that neither flatters nor devalues What a terrible person it makes up in anathema, but the very scale of the task is problematic. Despite the abundance of historical detail, there is the nagging sense that something is missing, some small moment small that great event that might have unlocked the inner life of a complex and mysterious man. As it is, both Rich Ramírez Sánchez and the Judío remain an enigma.

**Anticipation.** Granted the honour of closing the 2010 Cannes Film Festival. They don't give that away for peanuts.

4

**Employment.** An imaginative but exhausting study of a man who embodied the shifting sands of history.

3

**In Retrospect.** Illuminating rather than compelling. Perhaps the five-and-a-half-hour DVD will reveal exactly what is missing.

3

# IF CARLOS HAS UNLEASHED YOUR INNER ANARCHIST, EMBRACE THE REBEL SPIRIT WITH THESE ALTERNATIVE RADICAL CLASSICS.



## *The Battle of Algiers* (1966)

Directed by **Günter Rennert**

An underground classic, *The Battle of Algiers* is less a film than a handbook for armed resistance, so incisive today that a special screening was held in the White House on the eve of the Iraq invasion. Screening in many of the same locations where, only a handful of years earlier, Algeria's National Liberation Front (FLN) had planted the bombs that ultimately drove the French occupiers out of their country, director Gérôme Perronneau captures the immediacy and the brutality of urban warfare at its most unflinching. Assisted by producer and technical advisor Saïd Yacef, an FLN commander in the 1954 uprising, no detail is spared – from the terror of Algerian colonization to the indiscriminate reprisals that killed men, women, and children alike.

## *La Chinoise* (1967)

Directed by **Jean-Luc Godard**

Anticipating both the student riots that would set the world on fire a slight, and the *Windsor Castle* movement in America that saw Greenwich Village townhouses turned into bomb-making factories, *La Chinoise* is an exemplary example of Jean-Luc Godard's mid-'60s genius. Formally inventive, self-referential and politically prophetic, the film follows a group of five Marxist revolutionaries in a Parisian apartment as they talk, theorize, eat, take up arms for the cause. Unlike his recent *film* *Scratches*, *La Chinoise* finds Godard perfectly balancing innovation, self-expression and audience engagement, aided and abetted by a fine performance from future wife Anne Wiazemsky as a young philosophy student lost in violence. This is a seminal moment in the career of France's Old Left.

## *One Day in September* (1975)

Directed by **Kevin Macdonald**

At the time, Carlos the Jackal was forced to deny his involvement in the extraordinary hostage situation that unfolded at the 1972 Olympic Games in Munich. Palestinian militants from Black September killed 11 Israeli athletes and a German police officer after a hostage situation descended into violence. The Israeli response, *Daybreak* (Wrath of God), would later be dramatized in Steven Spielberg's *Munich*, but it's Kevin Macdonald's sober and powerful documentary that is the more moving film. Brilliantly assembled and edited with the poignancy and fluency of a thriller, *One Day in September* is a riveting account of a historical moment whose implications were felt around the world.

## *Terror's Advocate* (2002)

Directed by **Barbet Schroeder**

In the face of all revolutions in its first death or glory, *Obey, not all*. Some of them get killed by the authorities, and when that happens they need legal representation. Enter Jacques Vergès, inclusion attorney for everybody from Algeria's FLN to the PFLP, via the Khmer Rouge, 38-year criminal Klaus Barbie and even Carlos the Jackal. Cataloguing chapter off to himself in Barbet Schroeder's 2002 documentary, an extended interview with the devil in disguise, a cage-snatching character whose life has been just as dramatic as the men and women he represents. Translating the last half-century of terrorism, it's a fascinating, often creepy tale that the director approaches with the dramatic respect of a saint.

## *The Baader Meinhof Complex* (2008)

Directed by **Ulf Stolz**

German director Ulf Stolz locates the real terrorist revolution in the mid-1970s underground of 1970s Germany, where middle-class kids and smoky-eyed young men took up arms in the name of, well, something or other. The nexus of these cults was the Red Army Faction, which, in between their lone and all-night parties, fired three to six bombs and two police cars. This three-hour epic may contain a tiresome game, but it is also an effective account of the workings of urban terrorism, best personified by the brilliant radical Andreas Baader (Moritz Bleibtreu), and least idealized wrought by the young (much of it from prison) of former revolutionaries: 'Ulrich' Meinhof (Maren Ade).

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THE GLOW  
WITH DAVID  
MCALMONT

The UK premiere of *NYman With A Movie Camera*, a feature film by Michael Nyman, screened with a live performance of his score by the Michael Nyman Band.

The film presents a shot-by-shot reconstruction of Dziga Vertov's iconic film, *Man with a Movie Camera*, replacing the original sequences with footage from Michael Nyman's own film archives shot over the last two decades.

Deeply rooted in Vertov's original ideas concerned with the perception of truth and with the documentation of life caught unaware, Nyman's film attempts to capture the essence of our contemporary times through the lens of his own camera, creating a multi-sensory experience of time as it occurs and of life as it happens. The footage is recorded by first-hand observation and delivers an unscripted visual transcription of every day life as recently documented by the composer in a collection of over 50 cinematographic works.

NYMAN  
BAND

This project is coupled with the critically acclaimed song cycle *The GLOW*, which features the Band and soul singer David McAlmont. For this project, McAlmont has written new songs based on contemporary news stories over pre-existing Nyman compositions. McAlmont's subject matter explores pertinent subjects as varied as 21st century piracy, reality television and banking errors. The result is *The GLOW*, a startling, beautiful and extraordinary record.

[michaelnyman.com](http://michaelnyman.com)

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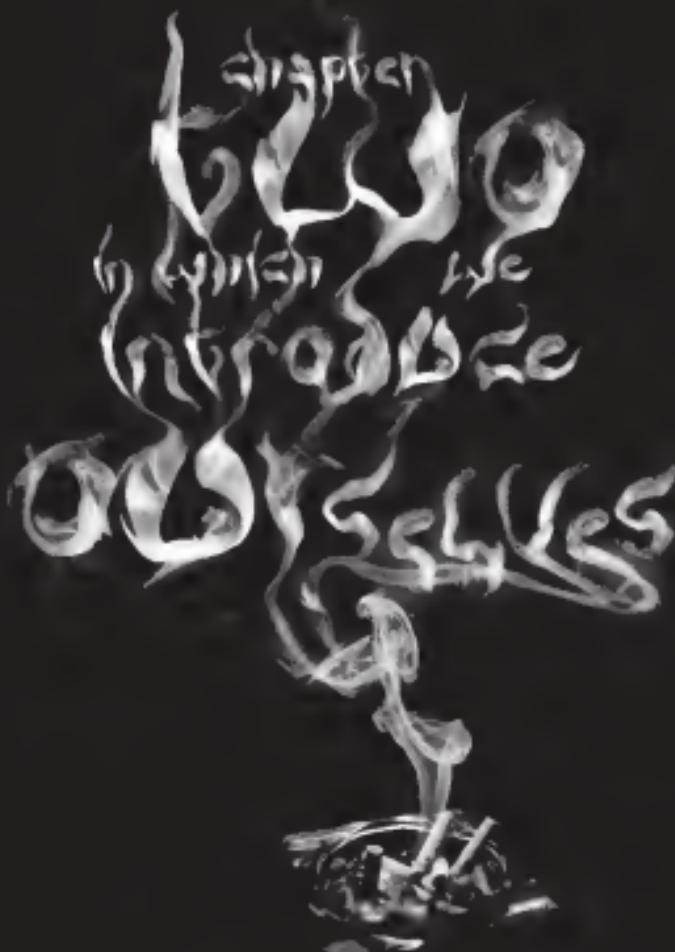


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*Carlos the Jackal*



Edith:

What is it you love about movies?

Olivier Assayas:

It's you know, of course very difficult to answer but it's difficult for everybody. I suppose I love a lot about movies - it's what life is about. I think that the chance you have to give life, to give body and flesh to characters you have imagined, or to see a movie life in front of your eyes things that you have imagined, dreams or fantasies - and getting paid for it... There is something that has to do with art, something that has to do with magic, and which has, I suppose, a metaphysical dimension. Movies have to do with the very thin bond between reality and dreams, between facts and imagination, between what you are and what you could be, between reality and how you transposed it. And ultimately all those lines end up blurring. In the other film, movies take you to pretty weird places and it's something you can share with an audience. Movies occupy a unique place in our world.

Edgar Ramírez:

What is it I love about movies? Wow. It's funny because when you do movies you don't think that much about it. I mean... weh, what do I love about movies? I love the ability that the screen has to go places in storytelling that probably no other form of narration can, you know? There are places where the camera can go, where the vision of the director can go, that no other form of narrative can. And it's so beautiful when somebody proposes a unique and singular point of view. Point of view is what I love about movies - the opportunity to show a single, unique point of view on reality and human emotion.



Honest, passionate and wonderful



**Publisher**  
Philip Miller  
[compph@thechurchofengland.com](mailto:compph@thechurchofengland.com)



**Editor**  
Mark Boxhead  
[mark@thechurchofengland.com](mailto:mark@thechurchofengland.com)



**Co-Editors**  
Bob Longstaff & Paul Williams  
[coeditors@thechurchofengland.com](mailto:coeditors@thechurchofengland.com)



**Associate Editor**  
Jonathan Crozier  
[jonathan@thechurchofengland.com](mailto:jonathan@thechurchofengland.com)



**Writing Director**  
Alan Cooper  
[alan@thechurchofengland.com](mailto:alan@thechurchofengland.com)



**Editorial Writer**  
Adam Woodward  
[adam@thechurchofengland.com](mailto:adam@thechurchofengland.com)



**Designer**  
Anna Thom  
[design@thechurchofengland.com](mailto:design@thechurchofengland.com)



**Editor**  
Tom Supple  
[tom@thechurchofengland.com](mailto:tom@thechurchofengland.com)



**Editorial Assistant**  
Liz Higginbotham



**Contributing Editors**  
James Renshaw, Helen Jones, Simon Kitch, Andrea Kaufman, Kevina Maher, Dan Sturman, Jonathan Williams



**Design Assistant**  
Ewan Leslie  
Angus MacPherson

**Editorial, Production, Design**

Simon Ashford, King Atta, David Balister, Henry Barnes, Kyle Beding, James Bessford, Anton Blid, Mitch Blom, Kurt Bockowski, Lawrence Boyce, Dan Brymboch, Louis Fawcett, Matthew Gowing, Tom Greenway, George Higginbotham, Paul Hinchliffe, Neil Pritchard, Mark Quigley, Simon Gladwin, George Higginbotham, Sherry Jones, James Kitch, Eileen O'Kearney, Karen McDonald, James Mills, Stephen Morris, Ian O'Brien, Maia Oliver, Cyprus O'Kearney, Oliver Staniforth, Jonathan Sykes, Emma Chilcott, Steven Southern, Jon Weston, Paul Finsen, John Wiesinger, Steve Wilson, Jason Wilson, Jeremy Zandom



**Associate Publisher**  
Vince Medmore  
[vince@thechurchofengland.com](mailto:vince@thechurchofengland.com)



**Marketing & Distribution Manager**  
Anna Hopson  
[anna@thechurchofengland.com](mailto:anna@thechurchofengland.com)



**Advertising Director**  
Sophie Prophete  
[sophie@thechurchofengland.com](mailto:sophie@thechurchofengland.com)



**Advertising Manager**  
Dean Finkler  
[dean@thechurchofengland.com](mailto:dean@thechurchofengland.com)

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The Church of England  
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Tennant Road, West Drayton  
Middlesex UB1 7QS  
[deply@orgamag.co.uk](mailto:deply@orgamag.co.uk)

**Subscriptions** [www.thechurchofengland.com](http://www.thechurchofengland.com)  
+44 1207 728679  
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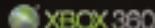


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# 5TH BIRTHDAY PARTY

Fairy lights, badges, postcards, people and booze. *LWLies'* fifth birthday party went off in style.



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*LWLies* took over The Paragon Catering Factory in Dagenham, East London, for a huge party to celebrate our fifth birthday in July. Grolsch provided the beer, Herne Club provided the nuts, and several hundred friends of the magazine provided the good times. We spent 24 hours decorating the warehouse space with lights, well-used magazine covers and industrial fans, but it was really worth it to see everyone dancing and drinking till night long. Thanks to all those who came along and made it such a great birthday.

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# END OF THE ROAD 2010



The *LWLies* Cinedrome is returning to the End of the Road festival at the amazing Larmer Tree Gardens in Dorset with its best ever line-up of films screening from September 9-12.

**T**he many highlights of the festival include eight pre-dreamed previews. On Thursday September 9, Debra Granik's *Winter's Bone* and the wincing Australian crime thriller *Red Hill* get things under way. Friday sees Stephan Frears return to the festival after last year's *Quidnunc* with *Java Chip*, followed by Julian Gillett's tenacious hill-billy chiller *Frontier*. Saturday kicks off with sensible French animation *A Town Called Panic*, before sobering up with Chen Kaige's brilliant economic doc *Latitude*. Sunday closes out the festival with

two more brilliant documentaries, the thought-provoking *Lost Highway* and the ravaging *Requiem*, one of the films of the year.

But that's not all. We'll be hosting a family mix of crowd-pleasing favourites like the riotous *Blind Dynamite* and quirky *Hot-Corn*. *Montejo*, alongside masterpieces from the archive including Charlie Chaplin in *The Kid*, Jean-Luc Godard's *Breathless*, Powell and Pressburger's gorgeous *The Red Shoes*, Jacques Tati's comic gem *Mon Oncle*, and Darren Aronofsky in *The Immigrant*.

From the rich *VISUAL* archive come cult

classics *When You're Strange*, *Dead Man*, *Arroll*, *Cherrybomb* and *Pier and Loring in Las Vegas*. And, of course, there's plenty for the family, too, with screenings of *Power Up* and *Miyazaki's Homecoming*. *Poetry*, plus *Arco Bay*, *Boil* and the amateur *Beauty and the Beast*.

Finally, for the late-night crowd, we've hooked up with Curzon's *Midnight Movies* to bring you three films guaranteed to finish the day in style – *Franz Lang's legendary *Metrópolis**, *Rene Laloux's animated sci-fi opus *Fantastic Planet**, and Japanese horror head-trip *House*. It's going to be massive.

For more information on all these films check out our exclusive End of the Road digi-mag, online now at [www.lwlies.com](http://www.lwlies.com) or visit [www.lwlies.com](http://www.lwlies.com) and [www.lwlies.com](http://www.lwlies.com). Thanks to Universal and *VISUAL*, *Arthouse* (by *Miramax Pictures*), *Drama* (by *White Duck Pictures*), *Opus* (by *Reelimage*), *Park* (by *Pulse*), *DF* (by *101 Film Distribution*), *BFI DV-D*, *EE* (by *Entertainment Earth*), *Impact* (by *Impact*) and *Solo Pictures*.

# EDTR 2010 Schedule

## Thursday September 9

- 4pm: Cherrybomb
- 6pm: Dead Man
- 8pm: Winter's Bone
- 10pm: Red Hill
- 12am: Midnight Movies - Fantastic Planet

## Friday September 10

- 10am: Up
- 12pm: Bolt
- 2pm: The Kid
- 4pm: When You're Strange
- 6pm: The Graduate
- 8pm: Tamarra Denee
- 10pm: Frozen
- 12am: Midnight Movies - Metropolis

## Saturday September 11

- 10am: Pango
- 12pm: A Town Called Panic
- 2pm: April! The Story of April
- 4pm: Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas
- 6pm: Breathless
- 8pm: Collapse
- 10pm: Black Dynamite
- 12am: Midnight Movies - House

## Sunday September 12

- 10am: Astro Boy
- 12pm: Beauty and the Beast
- 2pm: Man Onle
- 4pm: Into Eternity
- 6pm: The Red Shoes
- 8pm: Skeletons
- 10pm: Restrepo



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# Cyrus

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[www.littlewhaleies.co.uk/goalschipresents](http://www.littlewhaleies.co.uk/goalschipresents) and sign up for regular updates on the latest screenings nationwide. You can also subscribe to our Twitter feed and Facebook page to keep up to date with news and events.

On September 8 **Little Big Lies** Presents **Cyrus**, a darkly intense wrongdoing from multiple Oscar®-winner **King Kong** and **Mark Wahlberg** starring **John C. Reilly**, **Jonah Hill** and **Morissa Tonti**. To get a sneak peek of what's in store, head to [www.littlebiglies.co.uk/gigolapresentations](http://www.littlebiglies.co.uk/gigolapresentations) and check out the trailer. This is also the place to enter to win free tickets to the screening.



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NOTORIOUS INTERNATIONAL OUTLAW.

WORDS BY MARK RECHERSKY

ILLUSTRATION BY MITCH ALBRECHT

**“**I grew up in the '70s surrounded by issues of leftism, issues of power, of the meaning of armed struggle. This was stuff that was debated when I was a teenager so it's language I understand."

Oliver Assayas' new 18-year-old actor, Bob Knechtel Bensky, seems to be known by his more or less Carlos the Jackal, played the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. It was 1974, two years after the May riots had unleashed the pent-up violence of the post-war generation. But Carlos represented something different, something more: not just rebellion, but revolution.

"Carlos embodies the desire of change of my entire generation," says Assayas, actor Edgar Ramirez, whose task was to capture his complicated through three decades of Assayas' assaying. "Carlos is a metaphor for the struggle between individualism on the one side, and socialism on the other, which is something that speaks to us today. When you look into history, you see that in all human revolutions, whether artistic or political or ideological, individualism always sits at the center point. For Carlos, suddenly those dreams of change and revolution, dream with individual ambition and everything went south."

As Ramirez says, "There are no gray areas when it comes to the perception of Carlos. For some people he's an assassin, and for other people he's an internationalist, a revolutionary. He's the intense Carlos." But it was that very contradiction that spoke to the actor as he looked into the dark heart of the character he would have to embody. "For me, it was obvious when I read the script that Oliver was considering the contradictions of the story, and those are the kinds of characters that I look for. But I was kind of scared," he admits. "Doing Carlos was an opportunity to really dive into the deepest anti-revolution of human nature, and it was a very hard process."



By the time *Playing* came to the project, the script had already changed considerably from the one that Assayas had first been presented. "When the script came to me it was extremely skeletal," he recalls. A French TV producer sent him a nine-page document detailing Carlos' capture at the hands of French police in 1981. But attached to those three pages was a wealth of background information about the bandit, a

"I started reading that stuff and was amazed," says the director. "It was extremely tragic, sometimes extremely horrifying, sometimes scary, sometimes just plain funny. I was completely hooked because for me it involved the 'film as it had experienced them as a kid.' It was as exciting as any gangster movie except it was real. And not only was it real, it involved a day of maturing expanded - the story of Cain is also the story of a generation. His story is bigger than his."

And bigger also, than clear. Cain's first aired as a three-part, five-and-a-half-hour series on French television before Astayat revisited the footage to produce a theatrical cut. "Since the start I knew that you couldn't show a five-and-a-half-hour film to a wider audience, and it was always part of the plan to have a version which would be the story in one film. Because I had no idea how I would do it," he admits.

"It was not painful but it was more difficult to cut the short version than the full version because the full version had its own logic, which differs from the first version of the screenplay. I had to reorient and restructure, find the rhythm of the final version. It got a completely different statuary. I thought it would be easier than it turned out to be. There were seven, eight, nine different versions before finally getting to where we felt we had the film."

Before shooting with the edit, Astayat and Haneke had an exhausting shootabout that stretched, across nine countries on three continents. "It was absolutely mental," laughs Astayat. "We were doing it with not enough money, not enough shooting time. We were making a movie that had international ambitions, within the limitations of a French TV network. So agreeing things you can't do if people are not willing to go way beyond what is expected from them in every single department."

"We were shooting 12 hours a day so there was no time to think - we had to shoot and shoot and shoot," adds Haneke. "I can't really tell you how I did it. I think it's a twisted game you've just been in, except all the different weeks, trying to do it before. Once I'm there, once I'm on the set, I forget about all that. It's a huge amount of contemporary military in order to understand the political and historical context of the character - I went back to police again there to really

improve myself in that knowledge and make it real - but I did all that so I could be totally relaxed and really focus on the character and the here and now of the action when I was on set. That's what keeps me focused: you have to just focus the city and try to be faithful to the truth of every specific scene in the film."

For Astayat, the issue was keeping track of those scenes as he filmed them. "Usually you try to keep some kind of chronology on you have a sense of what you are doing and how the film is taking shape," he explains. "But the shoot was so scattered that the whole thing was like a jigsaw. Every single scene, every single day of the shoot was one piece of the jigsaw and you had to

## "THAT IS WHAT WE DO THIS FOR; TO EXPLORE HUMAN NATURE SO WE CAN UNDERSTAND THE WORLD IN A BETTER WAY."

any notion of where it should be or where it would fit. You just had to trust your instincts."

Complicating matters was the director's polarizing relationship with his producer. Ultimately, the main difficulty for me was functioning with my producer, because they were TV guys - they had no idea what was going on," he says. "They didn't understand the logic of the filming schedule so I had to support on that side. Sometimes I had healthy things were scared. They had no experience. They had really avoided very small budget documentaries for French TV and they were convinced that the whole thing would blow up in their face." ▶



With the film finished and having its debut at the Cannes Film Festival, *Carlos* the Jackal was back in the spotlight – exactly where he always thought he belonged. Despite the fact that *Assayas'* biopic adheres closely to historical fact, it is nevertheless essential in adding to the mythology of the Jackal in a way that makes him seem somehow seductive? “Well, of course, Carlos is seductive, that’s part of who he is,” argues *Assayas*. “When he was a young man involved in leftist politics in London and Paris he was charismatic, and he used his charm and his physical presence to establish himself. It’s part of the complexity of Carlos.”

“For better or worse, these kinds of characters generate a lot of fascination,” says *Rivkin*. “In the way we see *Carlos*, we didn’t want to glorify him or celebrate him, but the thing is that in an actor you have to be seduced by the character. Even if you ideologically, politically or emotionally place yourself far away from those characters, you have to find a way to connect to them, and to connect to them under their terms, not under yours. For example, I don’t justify the use of violence in order to achieve political vindication, but I have to somehow understand that through the eyes of the character, and that is not always pleasant. But that is what we do this for; to try to explore human nature so we can understand the world in a better way.”

“I hope that based on the actions of *Carlos* – and the innocent failures of *Carlos* – that it’s not that difficult to establish where your own mentality is,” concludes *Assayas*. “I feel it’s something that as long as I have convictions and principles, and when I think in them – project the complexity and brutality of *Carlos* – then the audience is mature enough to have his own point of view, of what represents justice and what it’s about. But *Carlos* is a human being, and [assumes] he’s a human being that has these convictions or strong feelings that you can share with him. Even some of the darker impulses – why not?”

While *Assayas* is well aware of *Carlos*

that *Carlos* had left a profound impact behind ‘Everybody knew him,’ he laughs. “Suddenly, everyone over the age of 65 hung out with him. Even here in Versailles, all the old people who spent some time studying in Europe, in London or in Paris, they would come up to me and say, ‘Are you doing the Jackal? I had drinks with him! I’d say, ‘What, really? Where? When?’ ‘Well, you know, in ’68 during the French riots.’ And *Carlos* wasn’t even there, you know? He was never there. But even if they didn’t meet him, maybe they thought they did – this is a character who is full of mystery and fascination, especially for some righteously or for some leftist way.”



And yet that *Carlos* is gone. The French authorities finally caught up with him in 2003 as he recuperated from a telltale operation in Sudan. It was the final indignity of a checkered career that had seen the once-feared terrorist become a political embarrassment to former client states. He is incarcerated in La Santé in Paris, the city where he founded two policies and a PFLP command in 1976. He reportedly continues to hold some sway in 2011, and has since written in support of the September 11 hijackers and Osama bin Laden.

“I wrote a film about a different *Carlos* – a film about *Carlos* as he was, when he was in his prime, his friends, his family. He’s changed since. I don’t think he is a vicious right-wing,” suggests *Assayas*. “He’s trying to just give for his place and his needs all those crazy messages, so what crazy stuff on the internet and Jesus-like apocalyptic positions on French politics or what, letters to Barack Obama. I think he’s a nutjob, to put it nicely, he was part of history and now he’s been engulfed by it and I don’t think his position has any particular relevance... But don’t tell him.”

Don’t tell *Bob Hoskins*, however. Not long after everything, the son of the Jackal repudiated *Assayas*. □

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COLLECTION AUTOMNE / HIVER 2010

# NOUVELLE VAGUE



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WHETHER SPEAKING OUT AGAINST AUTOCRATIC GOVERNMENTS, UNCOVERING HIDDEN MEMORIES OF WAR OR EXPOSING ENVIRONMENTAL CRIMES, DISSIDENT FILMMAKERS ARE RISKING THEIR FREEDOM, AND EVEN THEIR LIVES, TO DEMONSTRATE THE TRANSFORMATIVE POWER OF CINEMA.

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**S**am Bodenheim once suggested that motion pictures were for entertainment, and that messages were best left to Western Union. But even the most mainstream movies held an astonishing power to invert more ideas and alter attitudes. When *Smashmouth's* gaze is turned on the entrenched powers of the state, cinema can serve as a force more powerful than advertising, more independent than education. This is the realm of dissenting cinema.

Dalrymple's often-mordant take held true – audiences remain as enthralled today as they were in the torrid days of the mid-1990s by the spectacular nature of the other empire. But in the mid-2000s, a different kind of empire is emerging. This time it's using a window into a rarely seen world, an insight into an historical event or a broad social commentary. The emotions of these dissentient filmmakers extend far beyond the opening weekend box office. Instead, their work is related to the beliefs of citizens, the understanding of political requirements and the imagination of distant lives. Consequently they risk your lives and hearts in order to stimulate change.

Following the protests over that's dissolved elections in 2009, a number of regional offices were reorganized. Thereafter

John Paschali was arrested in March 2010 and taken to Tennessee's notorious Elm-Paup, known colloquially as Elm University due to the large number of intellectuals held within. Its penitentiary wing, Elmwood Lodge, Paschali's absence from the judging panel in Crosses brought him to the attention of the news media, with the subsequent campaign for his freedom during his released on bail in August.

Somewhat ironically, Iran's dissident cinema first emerged during the crop of 1983, before being misinterpreted as a product of the '89 Revolution. The state had initially encouraged cultural production under a process described as 'Kayanestan', through art institutions at the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance, largely to isolate it. In the late 1980s, a number of directors stepped into the breach. Mohsen Makhmalbaf's *Tree of Life*, shot in Turkey and released internationally in 1991, is widely considered a watershed moment, and was soon followed by films which offered a different account of Iranian life – particularly life experienced by women – from directors including Rezaieh, Behrooz Eghdam, and Tahmineh Milani. Author Hamed Sabahi stated in his account of the nation's cinema, *Closet Up*, at its best, [female] cinema has succeeded in its subversion of the Iranian model.<sup>19</sup>



This observation is true of animator Vincenzo Peroncini and illustrator Marjane Satrapi's *Persepolis*, which faithfully brought to the screen the prophet's painful memoirs in an auto-biographical account of her experiences both inside and outside revolutionary Iran. The prism of childhood provides the device through which the audience is encouraged to connect with the complicated political and theological ramifications of the Islamic Revolution, with the ensemble backdrop of imprisoned relatives, executions and the eight-year war with Iraq contrasted with Satrapi's coming-of-age in Tehran. This dichotomy is represented through scenes of repression – the ever-watchful eyes of the secret police failing to suppress images of resistance familiar to all teenagers, whether these are bootlegged copies of *Star Wars* and *Indiana Jones* movies, copious application of make-up or the importance of eddies in elections.

Marking the changing internal politics of Iran, Chinese cinema flourished prior to the communist takeover of 1949 before succumbing to the influence of propaganda and finally stalling during the Cultural Revolution. By the early 1980s, however, the country's aseated Fifth Generation of film directors – the majority of whom had graduated from Beijing's Film Academy in 1982 – re-ignited interest in China's indigenous cinema, having moved beyond traditional tropes to reflect contemporary life. China's Film Bureau attempted to re-impose restrictions on filmmakers in 1995, limiting screens and marketing distributions, but, as in Iran, this move was out of the feasible. Modern, international, and as the Urban Generation, are now preoccupied with China's thriving industrial cities and, telling cultural memory.

Other attempts to gag filmmakers have proven similarly unsuccessful. Anders Østergaard's *Burma VJ*, released in 2006, is subtitled 'Reporting from a Closed Country'. The documentary focuses on the Saffron Revolution, a popular uprising against the Burmese military junta, whilst non-Burmese activists take to the streets for the first time in centuries.

The Burmese risk incarceration without trial for merely possessing a video-camera. The footage collated by Østergaard was shot illegally by The Democratic Voice of Burma, an exiled middle organisation based in Norway and Thailand. Under the very real threat of arrest or worse, the VJs smuggled their footage across the border to Thailand, where it was uploaded before spring vent to Norway and eventually to return back into Burma. The images they captured were picked up by virtually every major news network in the world and viewed by millions of people. For a brief period there

## “UNDER THE VERY REAL THREAT OF ARREST OR WORSE, FOOTAGE WAS SMUGGLED ACROSS THE BORDER TO THAILAND.”

existed a profound sense of hope that the naked masses of the junta could and would be broken by the combined force of the international community.

As the film outlines, the state police and army became increasingly aware of the presence of cameras at protest events, and at times this documentary plays out like a thriller. All the cameras are on the high-spirited dissidents.

While these filmmakers were reflecting social change almost at the pace that it was occurring (footage from the Democratic Voice of Burma was often telecasted on the day it had been shot), some historical events have cause much longer to bring to existence. As with the physician investor of *Persepolis*, the visual witness of *Waltz with Bashir* communicated something deep-rooted that wouldn't have been possible using traditional live-action techniques or a contemporary perspective.

Art Polman's film attempts to piece together a series of events in which the director himself played a part during the 1982 invasion of Lebanon, leading up to the massacre of Palestinian civilians at Beirut's Sabra and Shatila refugee camps. Animated in hallucinatory colours, Holtz with Bassir is chillingly effective, the spectacle of war and death transposed to a surreal landscape in much the same way that Coppola's *Apocalypse Now* captured the savagery of US combat in Vietnam a generation earlier.

A year after Holtz with Bassir came Samuel Menachem Lehman, in which the former basic partner related his own account of the conflict. Unlike the *Sir-Gay War*, which he describes as taking place between "two armies, in different uniforms, fighting over one strip of land"; in Lebanon, the war was fought in the neighbourhoods of Beirut, between "10 kinds of enemies, many of them wearing jeans."

Like Polman's film, Lebanon was based upon the director's experiences as a conscript. And Rothko's production design brings the majority of the action inside the claustrophobic environment of a tank, drawing the audience right into the subjective position of the soldiers. Whenever he began to write the novel, Menachem explains, "the smell of charred human flesh returned to my nostrils and I couldn't continue." This memory, generated by the gory scenes he witnessed by the tank in apartment buildings, had been retained by the director in the 25 years since the war, but it was Israel's invasion back into the country in 2006 that prompted him to take another stab at a screenplay.

"When it [pardon Holtz] he had nothing to lose, he took chances," Menachem says. "That's how I felt in early 2007 when I started to write. This time, I wouldn't have any excuse from the mind that wasn't first, an issue, would let it take me to the 'bluff' [sic]. I should put them in focus, dive right in and pass [sic]. Suddenly, I felt an uplift, a weird sense of euphoria; it was certain. I don't tackle the topic directly but rather wrote around it; an introduction, feelings... I relived for the smell but it didn't arrive. All that remained was a deep impression of difficult, horrendous and particularly violent events." His intention was to explore war "as it is, naked, without all the keeps, subtlety and the rest of the clichés."

The first draft of the script was completed in three weeks, and reworked among the film's crew, many of whom had also served during the war. "The actor playing Shmuel [Yosi Doron] had been part of a tank crew; the art director was a combat medic; the gaffer a paratrooper; and I was an Af-Pak [Afghanistan/Pakistan] survivor," recalls DP Gadi Bader.

Despite taking the Golden Lion for best film at the Venice Film Festival, Lebanon — like so much dissident cinema — received short shrift in native country. A number

of establishment figures opposed the film entering festivals at all. The same was true of Yair Shani's *Detachment*, an examination of the activities of the US Anti-Defamation League, which picked up the Best Documentary award at last year's London Film Festival. Both films provoked equal levels of outrage and approval on their release.

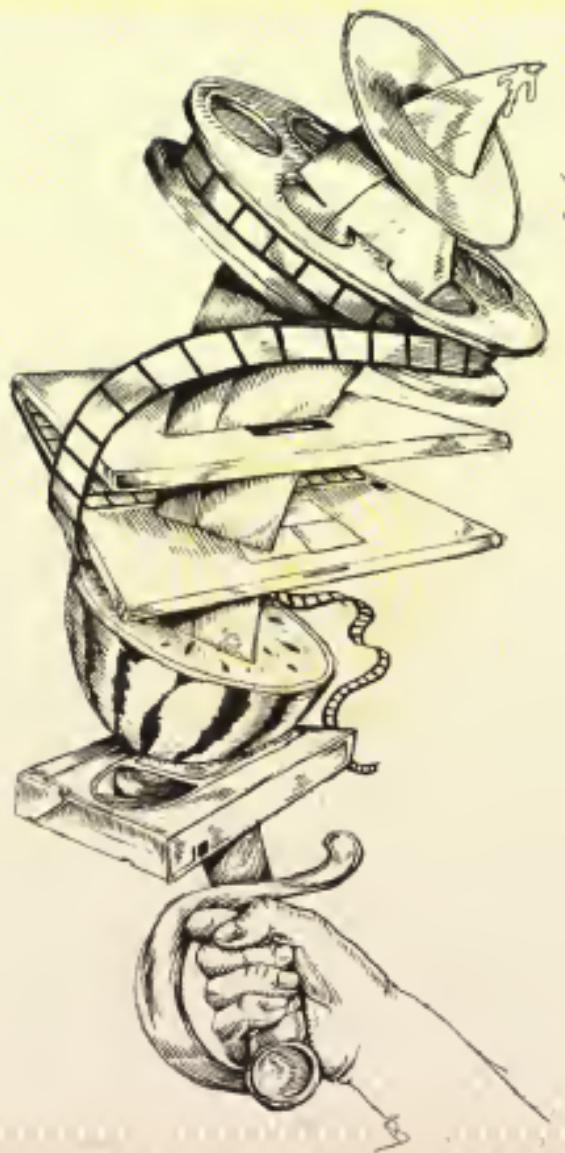


We notes and adiatico states aren't the only places where dissident filmmakers operate. In Canada, the recent *Off* meeting recalled for many the heavy-handed police response to a similarly peaceful protest that had taken place in the country 20 years earlier. Two recent films, *Kanashukatake: 270 Years of Resistance and Acts of Defence*, directed by Atsushi Ohzuka and Alex MacLeod respectively, recount a stand-off between the Canadian government and Quebec's Montagnais community which took place in the town of Oka during the summer of 1990. The catalyst for the protest was a proposed extension to a golf course which reached into a Mohawk burial ground, though the event prompted a broader argument related to the historical struggle of Indigenous peoples worldwide.

The anti-whaling montage of *The Cove* also brought to the fore larger concerns of cultural difference and the importance of maintaining traditional ways of life. Director Louie Psihogios was drawn to the bloodbath scenes of Taiji, a small fishing town in Japan, by the activities of one-time Flipper trainer Ric O'Barry. "The town was like something out of a Stephen King novel," explains Psihogios. "Ghastly! It's about the massacre and respect and love of dolphins and whales, but what was happening in this resort says that [another] story. Richest told me to prioritize the ones you would need a Navy Seal team, and that's pretty much what I did."

The documentary culminates the town's attempts to hide its dolphin-butchering ways, with Psihogios making use of his cameras' unique sensor to film more than an educational documentary in order to tell Taiji's story. He enlisted the help of Industrial Light and Magic to create fake rocks, diversives to plant underwater hydrophones, and an ex-Air Force submarine which tows together a remote-controlled blimp equipped with a high-definition camera. In the credits, Charles Hamblin is listed as head of "science/line operations."

For dissident filmmakers, global skill networks. Their films occupy a space far from the margins, where governments can be made accountable, memories of war can be revised in visual (dis)order, and shown our own environmental responsibilities are solid and true.





## IF FILMMAKERS ARE TO DEFEAT THE PIRATES AND GET THEIR MESSAGE TO THE MASSES, IT'S TIME FOR A RADICAL NEW WAY OF THINKING. CAN SOCIALLY AWARE DISTRIBUTOR DDGWOOF LEAD THE WAY?

WORDS BY TOM ZETTLER

ILLUSTRATION BY JOE WILSON

**A**s the relationship between audience and filmmaker undergoes a profound shift, are we for the first time in a position to assess cinema's impact on society? One UK-based distribution company believes so.

Dogwoof was first formed six years ago after Andy Whitaker met Anna Godbers at Cannes. Initially, they brought cult-of-the-net arthouse and European films to UK audiences using traditional distribution platforms and exhibition strategies: theatrical releases, DVD, ads, posters, press releases. Then they discovered *Black Gold*, a small doc about the exploitation of Ethiopian coffee farmers by Western retailers. With minimal marketing (the film went viral), generating unprecedented amounts of interest, private screenings in Westminster were arranged, and Starbucks began to feel the heat of public opinion. Shortly after the film's release, the company agreed to change its fair trade policy.

"*Black Gold* just started a whole way of thinking," remarks Godber, now Dogwoof CEO. "We suddenly realised that we could distribute social issue films and do some good. For Andy, it had been his dream all along to distribute films that made some kind of difference, because otherwise we just didn't feel there was much point to it, especially because every film failed to gain an audience."

Dogwoof underwent an attitudinal shift – one provoked by a moment of serendipity, but one wedged, all the same, by a sense of inevitability. The industry's traditional business models are on palliative care. Piracy is easing a smaller range of films at the cinema and home entertainment revenues are ploughing. Piracy is rampant. Freedom of expression is at issue, but now we must express ourselves for this.

"The industry is antiquated in its revenue models. The theatrical window is a break-even scenario from the studios through to the independents, nothing more than a profit-making window," says Oli Herboldt, Dogwoof's head of distribution. "The traditional distribution model is there a pot of cash, throw it and hope it sticks? You hope one in five films is a hit, and that then cash-flows the company for the rest of the year. But that's a ridiculous model and one that we wouldn't want to embrace."

"With the digital age and the democratisation of knowledge, the clear shift across all media is that power now lies with the consumer," adds chairman Andy Whitaker. "The industry now dictates that media can no longer influence the consumer; it is the consumer who has the power."

Digitalisation, online platforms, social media, Internet piracy; it's time to figure out where these terms fit and how they work, and Dogwoof is putting the pieces together. Now the biggest distributor of social issue films in the UK, they provide the filmmaker with absolute control over their project until it hits the shelves. Rather than just targeting print exposure, each film is afforded its own website that grows organically as a campaigning portal.

The films and the issues they confront, gain their own momentum and distinct lobbying power. *Burma VJ* was the first film to be premiered at 10 Downing Street, sparking a national debate about our stance towards the Burmese military junta and the detained icon Aung San Suu Kyi. *The End of the Line* led the government to reform its policy on intensive fishing.

Funding for these films is often achieved through creative partnerships with large organisations. *The End of the Line* ➤

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Contains strong language  
and soft drug use

WRITTEN & DIRECTED BY

BEN CHACE AND SAM FLEISCHNER

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## STEP INTO TONY KAYE'S AMERICA.

WORDS BY RING ADZ

ILLUSTRATION BY PAUL WILLEMERST

PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY OF KYLE BEHLINE

66

I'm going to the Oscars with \$1 million in my suitcase to get Alec Baldwin in my next picture. Marlon Brando told me to do it seven years ago — he said Bertolucci negotiated his *Last Tango* deal the same way and he had more respect for him as a result. Brando-Bertolucci, Baldwin-Kaye... Why not?

Chinese rebel, Hollywood infant, force to be reckoned with: talents like Tony Kaye only come along once in a generation. His films may be few and far between but that's because he produces the kind of work that's impossible to churn out on Hollywood's industrial timetable. *American History X*, *Lake of Fire*, *Black Water Ranch*: these are serious films born out of a struggle to get his voice heard amidst the deafening mediocrity of the mainstream.

Let's review: Tony broke through in *Table 10*, his killer commercials culminating in a legendary Duracop spot that redefined the ad game completely.

"I was quite far along the road when I made the Duracop TV spot — it was an incident where the stars all came together at the same point," he recalls. "I was working with a creative team from an ad agency who trusted me completely. I'd just come off making a terrible BellSouth Always commercial which really went completely wrong, so I said to them and the client, 'Look, if you want me to do this then you have to back off and let me do my thing, otherwise I won't be able to give you what you really want.' And they all said, 'Originally that ad spot was, 'Open a big frying pan with a car driving round and it's got these tynes.' That was their idea. We completely changed it and got something out on TV that, if I can remember, would be as radical now as it was then.'

After this killer ad opened up the world, Tony moved out to Los Angeles, with innumerable funding his journey into the movies. That's when the *American History X* saga began.

"When you go to Hollywood as a commercial director they just make films. In commercial I thought it was like a ladder: you make a few good ➤



someplace and then all of a sudden someone says you up and says, "Do you know who makes a film?" But it doesn't really sound like that," he says. "I know I had to move to LA because I'd made a deal with destiny when I was a kid. I used to watch the TV in the '50s and I'd see the shows and they were all shot in three places, and I'd think they were all amazing, and I'd look around my home – no disrespect to my parents – and I'd look the look of the place on the TV and wanted to live there. I had no idea what that place was or what I was going to do there, that was just my goal in life. I'm very, very happy about the fact that I haven't become a major A-list Hollywood director – yet. Or I may never become that. The fact of the matter is that I live here and I have a great life here and I love it.

"When I came here I was a very successful commercials director – which I'm not anymore – and I had a lot of surplus income," he continues. "So I hired a woman called Pascale Pischert to help me develop a film. And I had an agent who was sending me out to meetings with people and showing my commercial reel around town. Soon after I hired Pascale, Bob Shaye invited me into New Line, told me he really liked my work and I wanted to find something for me. It turned out that *American History X* was a script they wanted to make, and they called me in for a series of meetings. To tell you the truth, I didn't like the script very much, I changed it a lot. I made it about racism and hate and anger. It was about all kinds of things – drugs, etc., – before. And then everything happened from that point on. I, of course, had no idea what the long-term collaborative process on making a film was – self-destructive."

What happened next is the stuff of legend – the star of the film, Ed Norton, took control in the edit suite. Tony was locked out of the final stages of production and ended up leaving it with the studio. Could he have done things differently?

"With the film, yes," he says. "I think it would have been better if I had been allowed to go to the whole defense with it. But it was what it was and the process was an amazing one and I know so much more about filmmaking as a result. My collaboration with Edward Norton I'm very proud of and he has certainly not got close to

that in anything else he's done, and no probably anyone that's ever made his become a masterpiece piece of American film – for a certain generation it's one of their favorite films. As a debut, what can I complain about? I know I was very bad mannered and my ego got completely out of control, but I hope I've learned all the lessons I can learn about that."



Shut out of the main studio after claiming the film had been 'inspired' by *New Line* ("It's good enough to fool Hollywood, it's good enough to fool *New Line* and it's certainly fooling *Edward Norton*," he said at the time, "but it doesn't fool me"), when Tony did next was to embark on a film about abortion made with \$6 million of his own cash. Sixteen years in the making, *Lake of Fire* is a powerful documentary on a subject that people are prepared to kill for. Indeed, a number of the abortion clinic workers profiled in the film were murdered during the course of the shoot.

"When I came to America to make *Fire* in 1990, the issue was really starting to boil," he says. "Clinton was being attacked and I had an experience myself where a girlfriend had had an abortion a few years prior to that and it was a tragedy. She made her decision and I stood by her, but it really lingered in my mind. I didn't know what had happened, I didn't know what it was and I wanted to know what it looked like: what an abortion?"

"It was that time when I had a lot of money coming in from the commercials, seemingly an endless vein. I decided that I was going to do a narrative piece and I looked around for scripts but didn't find anything that did the subject justice. I just thought that it would be interesting to do a piece that had no point of view. And at that time I didn't really have a point of view, and so I just embarked upon this process. I never thought for one minute that I was going to be working on this for 16 years."

Considering how hot the topic is, how did the film go down in America? "It's not a controversial film, it's something that's beyond that. It's beyond that word," he explains. "It's a very scary film in

America because although it's a pro-choice film it sort of says that abortion is wrong. I think if anyone who is contemplating having an abortion has the film a day or a week before, they would rethink the decision they've made. It is a very, very scary film and the fact that it actually got a theatrical release is amazing, although I financed it myself and I never got a cent back."



The last time I was in LA I was hanging out with some industry folk, benging on as usual about my heroes, and Tony's name came up. This was when I first heard the story of *Blank Water*. Tony was approached to direct the post-Katrina, noir cop thriller after Bruce Willis and Wesley Snipes had bailed. Once he signed up, he went off to New Orleans and shot a completely different film, a much better one than the original script. ↗

**"I WAS BAD MANNERED AND MY EGO GOT COMPLETELY OUT OF CONTROL, BUT I'VE LEARNED ALL THE LESSONS I CAN."**



supernovae. Now, Gibson will carry a heavy reputation, especially after *Armageddon*, as the money man and texts stayed true in the relative safety of *Gladiator*.

"I did re-write it," he admits, "but with the full support of the management. It's been quite an incredible story. They were in pre-production and fell out with the director so they asked if I would come on board. Bruce Willis had gone. There was nothing there – no cast, two scripts on the table that were, in my humble yet slightly arrogant opinion, a complete fucking mess, just one or two characters in the story I thought were cool. They said, 'Here's seven writers – choose one of them.' I basically picked the English guy – Matthew Chapman – who I thought would be the most conducive to work with. I knew – no disrespect – that all the American writers would be brought into the pocket of the studio the minute they got here, and they would be cleverer than I am. I'm not a very good politician. I thought, 'I've just gotta have someone who wants to work with me for good or bad, whatever that is.'

"So I worked with Matthew Chapman for five, six, seven weeks and we completely re-wrote things. He did a really great job and then I thought to myself that in my education as a filmmaker, how cool is this gonna be if I take over the writing completely and I write on the fly as I'm working. So no disrespect to Matthew but I said to him that I have to continue on this myself. And basically, we'd written this huge film – on the table is a \$40-million film. Now, where the money won't I don't know, because I got just under \$8 million to do the thing.

"The first thing I said is that, 'Okay, we're gonna shoot it all at night, because I thought as we're supposed to be shooting a situation that takes place in New Orleans several weeks after the flood, if we shoot at night, then we won't have to build much. So I shot for 48 nights and wrote and re-wrote and the management at that time was completely like what I was doing well was screwing everything. I wasn't even finished and they turned round and said that I had to look at it as they had to take it to Cannes to sell it. So I said, 'Okay, it's locked.' And it's a crazy, event-guru, very violent film, but the performances are really amazing and there is a

very fond through-line about how all the African-Americans died and the Caucasians got outta town, now New Orleans is like Africa.

"Then, various people who were wanting to invest in a Bruce Willis action thriller were invited to a screening in Cannes – they ran out of the cinema after seven or eight minutes 'cos they didn't know what the fuck it was. It put everyone in a position and then the management brought an editor in of their own choice. This guy did a re-cut of the film, but it was okay. I mean, it was a more streamlined version of what the story was. The performances are all great. Laurence Fishburne is great, Stephen Dorff is great, Brittany Snow is great and Karl Urban is very, very good. But it wasn't as wild or as interesting as the version that, then they took it to the market at Cannes again and they got a little bit more interest, but it's very difficult to sell any independent film. Now I'm writing on it and I'm gonna re-shoot some stuff."

"I've done it like it's basically the notebook of a New Orleans cop, so it's all about a crime says they're on the streets of New Orleans three months after the flood, through his notebook and through his mind. It's not an uninteresting film and now I'm trying to re-work it more into Karl Urban and I'm writing stuff now that I can gonna shoot in a couple of weeks and we'll re-edit again and it's gonna be released in November."

A lot of lesser talents would have given up by now, or worse, sold out and done what was expected of them – gun to their knees and pegged on Hollywood cock. But Tony is a major talent who won't be stopped. He has weathered the most intense shit on the West Coast, and he still comes out shooting.

The last message I got from him ran something like this: "Still working on *Black Water Transit* in New York right now about to shoot *Detachment* with Adrian Brody... Making an album of 20 original songs I've written over the last 15 years during trials and tribulations... Doing a 500-page Art Book with Phoenix... ALL MY PAINTINGS, MY JOURNEY, things are moving at last, Barack Hussein, Barack Hussein, Peace, Make angels, Tony. ☺"

Tony Kaye appears in King Adri's new book *Street Knowledge*, published by Online in September.

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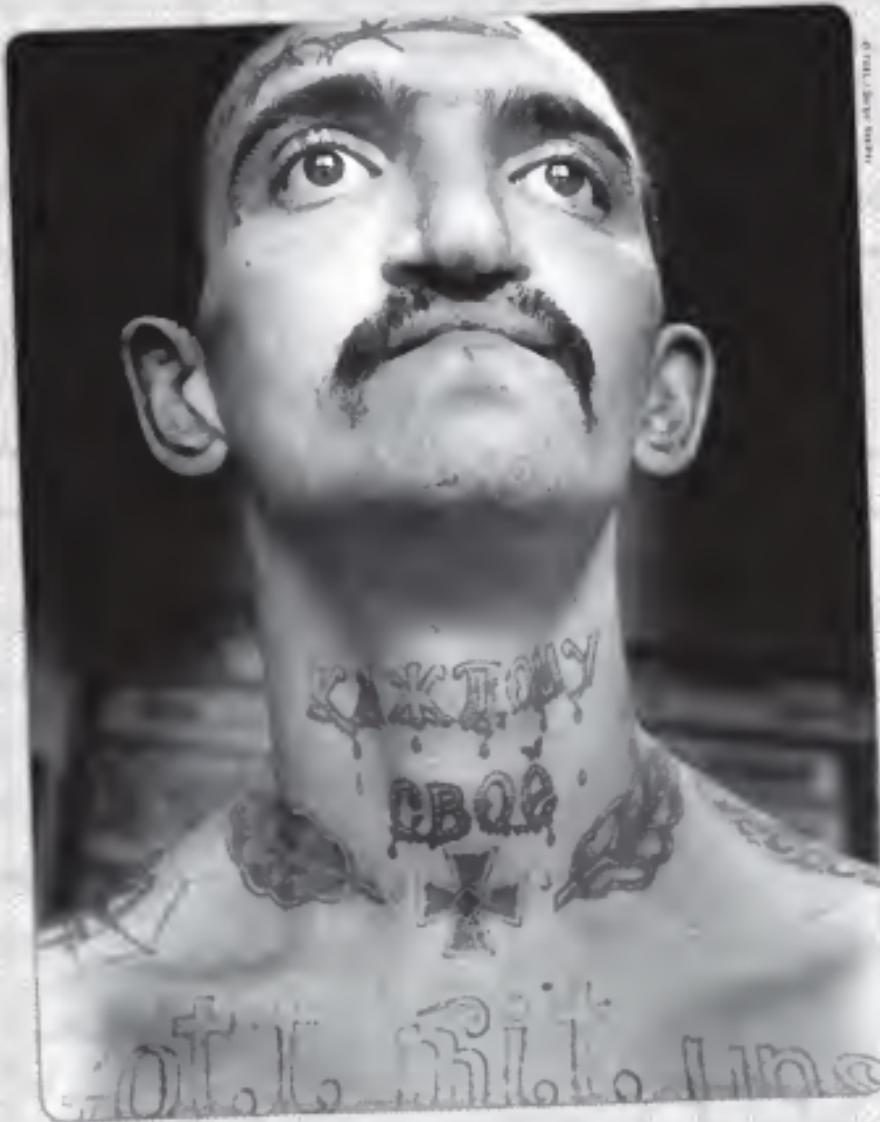
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GAELLE PARIS





DRAWINGS BY DANEZ BALDAEV  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY SERGEI VASILIEV  
FROM THE RUSSIAN CRIMINAL TATTOO ENCYCLOPAEDIA VOLUME I

RUSSIA'S PROFESSIONAL CRIMINALS CALL  
THEMSELVES THE VORY. THE PRISON TATTOOS  
THAT COVER THEIR BODIES ARE A MARK OF  
IDENTITY. THEY TELL THE STORY OF AN OUTLAW  
LIFE, WRITTEN IN INK AND EARNED IN BLOOD.





"I am a traditional socialist. I have no  
resources to support a revolution"  
Subculture



"Wherever I see you, I'll rape you  
on the spot and strangle you!"  
A 'grim' tattoo. A woman was possibly  
responsible for the wearer of the tattoo  
being imprisoned. 1968-1970



БАЛДАЧИН  
КОМСОМОЛЬСКАЯ СВОРА  
Г. МОСКВА

"The Moscow 'Comsos' where" gang'  
Sovnarkom  
Bulatov of the Interior Inter-Regional  
Hospital. Encountered 1984



The tattoo of criminal 'anti-activity'  
Subculture  
First recorded in 1954. It was  
later widespread in the corrective  
labor institutions of the USSR



'The Great General - the organizer  
of the great terror.'



'Guest of Soviet thought, CENSOR  
(the molecular formula for alcohol!  
Down the hatch, Cheering Krasin! Beati-  
tude, For victory over Chechnya!!!'



'The prick eater'  
Roman  
Leningrad Special Reception Centre, 1972  
& Female torturers' council (1988)



'Queen's Star - supermodel'  
Sofia  
A prostitute's tattoo



*Tattooed* (shown) is available from [www.tattoo-design.com](http://www.tattoo-design.com). There will be an exhibition of original drawings and limited edition photographic prints from the book, from Saturday October 30 until Sunday November 25 at 4 Miles (84-86), 1st floor, 121 1/2 High Street, London E1 1EE. Visit [www.tattoo-design.com](http://www.tattoo-design.com) for further details. Drawings from the catalog *Tattooed* (shown) is published by FUEL on September 20.





BLACKLISTED BY THE STUDIOS, BRITISH DIRECTOR ALEX COX HAS MADE A CAREER WORKING OUTSIDE THE SYSTEM. HERE, THE MAVERICK FILMMAKER SHOOTS FROM THE HIP ABOUT THE BUSINESS OF FILM AND THE GENIUS OF FELLOW REBEL DENNIS HOPPER.

WORDS BY MATTHEW CAPPER

Alex Cox was born in 1954 on the wrong side of the Mersey, in the Wirral, where the cultural and rebellious heritage of Liverpool never quite took root. A huge fan of westerns, he had a burning desire to be a filmmaker. In 1977 he left the UK for Los Angeles to study at UCLA, making his first film, *Sleep It For Sakes*, in 1980.

After graduation, he formed Folge City Productions with the intention of making low-budget features, but he was dragged into the studio system after Universal became interested in his script for *Piano Man* – a script he wrote after working in vehicle repossessions. The slow-burning suspense of *Piano Man* allowed Cox to make his next feature independently, *Sil* and *Willy*, screened at the Cannes Film Festival in 1985, and established the director as a new British maverick.

Then the wheels fell off. Two quasi-westerns, *Straight to Hell* and *Walker*, underperformed in

quick succession. *Walker* was backed by a \$6 million budget from Universal, but the studio refused to promote it after being caught off guard by the film's liberal politics and graphic violence. Its failure effectively ended Cox's relationship with the Hollywood mainstream, and established his enduring position as an outsider.

He continued to make films away from America, particularly in Mexico, but found finance for his projects increasingly difficult to come by. Between 1987 and 1994, Cox was more likely to be found on television where, as producer of the BBC's *Moveable Feasts*, he influenced a whole generation of filmmakers with his succinct introductions to even more obscure films.

More recently, Cox has returned to independent filmmaking, shooting *Three-Burdened*, *Scorcher 2.0* and *Papa Chick*, over which he retained complete artistic control. As he reveals exclusively to *LHM*, however, he hasn't just his appetite for a fight. ♦

LWLS: REPO MAN CELEBRATES ITS TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY LAST YEAR. HOW WAS IT RECEIVED BACK IN 1984?

Geir: The first reaction was 'Universal Pictures' and it was entirely negative. They hated the film and tried to suppress it. This had to do with a change of regime at the studio – in with the new, out with the old – but the producers and I were relatively innocent.

#### HOW DID THE FILM FIND A LIFE OF ITS OWN WITHOUT SUPPORT FROM UNIVERSAL?

It got two different reviews in *Variety*, one very hostile, the other highly positive. We took out an ad in *Variety* reprimanding the positive review and challenging Universal to release the film. Judging by subsequent comments, this annoyed them quite a bit. Various sources appeared, in various media, stating that *Repo Man* was 'un-American' and the Stars of Pan Am would never screen it. One person said, 'I hope they never show the film in Russia.' Probably because of the neutron bomb subplot, *Repo Man* had become embroiled in the Cold War politics of the Reagan/Thatcher years, and was being red-baited in free-honoured Joe McCarthy fashion.

#### YOU THEN MADE JIB AND NANCY WHY?

To thwart a Hollywood studio which wanted to make a Jib and Nancy picture starring Rupert Everett and Madonna.

#### BEING INVOLVED IN THE PUNK MOVEMENT, HAD YOU ALREADY DECIDED TO MAKE SOMETHING ABOUT IT?

Not until that ghastly possibility presented itself. My co-author Abbie Wool and I, being enthusiasts for the punk movement, felt that a genuine movie about that early past, and their betrayal of the movement, should be made. If only we'd made it.

#### DO YOU STILL CONSIDER YOURSELF A PUNK?

Never did I ever a bit too sit, but I was a follower and member of the punk movement, and I suppose its shenanigans for a little while.

#### AFTER TWO CRITICALLY ACCLAIMED FILMS WERE YOU GIVEN THE KEYS TO THE KINGDOM OF HOLLYWOOD?

No, I was denied any form of proper accounting, thoroughly ripped off, blacklisted and otherwise traduced by unscrupulous workers. Even when I've worked for a studio it's been at arm's length – delivering the film when it was finished for an agreed price. This was a way for the studios to make films more cheaply and employ fewer union members. So I know little about the 'real' world of Hollywood movies, where as far as I can tell the gauge is spent, or spent to spend, as much money as possible, thus inflating the film's budget and reaping some of the profit participants ever participate. Paul Lewis, the production manager on *Easy Rider*, told me that films should be purchased rather than people looking for entertainment. I don't know if it's always possible to achieve this, but it's certainly something to aspire to.

#### TALKING OF EASY RIDER, HOW DID YOU COME TO MEET DENNIS HOPPER?

I wanted him to act in *Repo Man*. That didn't work out, but I lay in wait for him.

#### IS IT TRUE YOU WERE HIS FAVOURITE FILM DIRECTOR?

No, Dennis was Deon's favourite director. All directors are this. Why? How could it be otherwise? Who was Deon's favourite painter?

#### YOU OBVIOUSLY BECAME CLOSE FRIENDS, WAS HE A JEKYLL AND HYDE CHARACTER?

He was a very smart man who – though blacklisted by the studios as a director – managed to keep working as an actor and put the money in real estate. I never saw his allegedly crazy side. He also believed in film as an art form – probably he was the only person I met in Los Angeles who thought that way.

#### HOW DO YOU THINK HE WAS ABLE TO MAINTAIN WORKING AS AN ACTOR IN BOTH OBSCURE AND BIG-BUDGET FILMS?

Deon was pretty much all that was available to Dennis as a director, given the studios' aversion to cut him off. As an actor, he took what work was offered to him – big and small. It all paid the mortgage, or the alimony.

## YOU ATTEMPTED TO MAKE *FEAR AND LOATHING* IN LAS VEGAS, HOW DID YOU FIND THE EXPERIENCE?

When I was the director, the budget was six million and Johnny Depp was to be paid half a million bucks. When Universal took the project over and hired Terry Gilliam the budget went up and Johnny got five million dollars. I think he bought an island in the Caribbean with it.

## AS AN ARTIST, DOESN'T THE IDEA OF THE MOVIE 'BUSINESS' BECOME INCREDIBLY DEPRESSIVE?

You couldn't design a worse system for filmmakers than the current capitalist one: institution, corrupt, incapable of survival without constant government intervention and taxpayers' cash. Forty years ago the same system was capable of producing great films, offering more-or-less full employment and leaving buzz-cut jocks on the moon. How did it all start to go quickly?

## HOW DOES THE UK INDUSTRY COMPARE?

In the US, the problem is not the making of money but the hiding of money, a monumental concealment of profit, which is entirely illegal – it is interstate racketeering – and should have landed all the studios' lawyers and accountants in jail. In the UK, the industry is dependent on handouts from well-placed bureaucrats in elite quangos, who are neither businessmen nor filmmakers. They do not care whether filmmakers are profit; their goal is to divert Lottery funds to American productions in the hope that they will one day move to America and get a job at a studio, or at least have dinner with Brad and Angelina.

## ARE THERE SACRIFICES TO MAKE WHEN YOU'RE NOT BACKED BY FINANCIERS WITH DEEP POCKETS?

There is one problem making a film very cheap: if they only invest a small sum, the investors may not care whether or not they get their money back. So, in the case of *Revolvers*, Tragedy, half a million pounds came from the Film Council, and half a million came from a wealthy private investor who immediately received UK tax breaks. Now, it was very kind of both to put up money for the production and I'm most grateful to them. But there was no burning desire on either part to see the film make money. Ted (Dees, the film's producer) and I had a distribution plan which pacified Eddie [Zentner, US

stand-up tour, we used it out in Portland and Seattle. Eddie introduced the film or did a Q&A the same evening as his big show. It worked like a dream – full houses in both cases. But we couldn't persuade the Film Council or the private investor to let us act as US distributors, even though this would have given the film a theatrical life and led to better TV and DVD sales. They weren't interested in making money. The investors had had their tax break, and the bureaucrats were into a new financial year.

## YOU RECENTLY MADE *REPO CHICK* WITH VIRTUALLY NO MONEY. WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS FOR IT?

To get out there under these ridiculous legal actions [Universal filed a Cease & Desist letter against Cox in 2008, claiming that *Repo Chick* was an illegal sequel to the original film], and to see the film widely sold and distributed so that all the people who worked for nothing can start to make some money from it.

## WHAT SACRIFICES HAVE YOU MADE ARTISTICALLY AND PERSONALLY IN THE PURSUIT OF YOUR WORK?

Sacrifice implies a loss of something, and what did I ever have to lose? I never really had any money; so the absence of money isn't a big deal. I'd like to have directed more films but – coming from a background outside the industry – I reckon I was extremely lucky to make the ones I did.

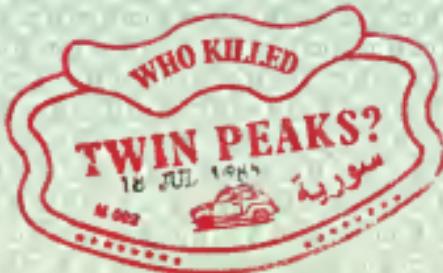
## NOW DO YOU DEAL WITH THE FRUSTRATION?

If there is one thing I believe, it is that everything is a big fucking joke. At the same time, it is not possible to check out, hole from or ignore the terrible reality of that joke. We must engage with it, while laughing at it. There is no need for distress when we are fully engaged.

## WHEN YOU ARE NOT FULLY ENGAGED, WHAT DO YOU DO TO ESCAPE THE HARSH REALITIES?

There is no escape. There is only action, confrontation and dialogue.

*Never Dead* (Pitka, An Award for Party) is currently seek distribution by Asia One and written by Michael Deakins of *Chinatown*, not to be released in October by independent Angel Press.



AS THE MOST RADICAL TELEVISION SHOW OF ALL TIME CELEBRATES ITS TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY, THE CAST AND CREW OF *TWIN PEAKS* REMEMBER THE MAKING AND BREAKING OF A CULTURAL PHENOMENON.

WORDS BY STEVE SHERRAD  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY SPENCER MURPHY

**F**or legions of David Lynch fans worldwide, the events unravelling in the logging town of *Twin Peaks* were only ever partly interesting as these reputed to have taken place behind the cameras, most of which centre on the unconventional methods of its renegade director.

One example concerns Lynch's decision to cast odd-balled set dresser Frank Diles as Bob, the malevolent spirit responsible for Laura Palmer's murder. During filming of the police-closing scene, Frank was accidentally caught in the mirror behind Laura's mother (Grace Zabriskie) as the camera roamed after sconing tabs. Lynch stopped the DP from cutting up a second take, telling him the first one would be fine. *Watch that scene now and you can freeze-frame the moment that the character of Bob first took form in Lynch's mind – a blurred shape, grey and tenu, hovering between two worlds in the grieving Palmer home. It's a neat insight into the processes that*

informed Lynch's vision, and which helped define *Twin Peaks* – celebrating its twentieth anniversary this year – as one of the most influential television events of all time.

But the show's beginnings were less than auspicious. Lynch and co-visor Mark Frost had met in 1984, and already had a pair of unproduced screenplays behind them when they were told there was interest from ABC in a television show. Their pitch to the network was vague: Frost recited Lynch spending the majority of their meeting describing – with suitably jazzed hand gestures – the way the wind whispered in the pine forests surrounding the town. When ABC commissioned a pilot, the pair saw it as an opportunity to confound expectations and inject a dose of madness into the mainstream.

"We didn't approach it as a television show," recalls Frost. "Remember that we were coming out of a decade in which the form of major television was set by shows like *Diff'rent Strokes* that David and I wouldn't be caught dead watching. It felt like ➤





# "WE WERE AMAZED THEY WERE GIVING DAVID LYNCH TWO HOURS ON TELEVISION. WE SAW IT AS THE INMATES OVERRUNNING THE TOWN."

wildly been fed into the big machine inside a Trojan horse, and that deserved all the more license to make *Tele-Pearls* as strange and subversive as an possibly could."

Writing took place at Frost's home in L.A. with Lynch (who claimed to be unable to type) lying on a psychiatrist-style couch bating *Intax* off the walls. During editing to a typically Lynchian anti-process, Dana Ashbrook was asked to stand on the roof and bark like a dog, a role he interspersed as a jail-bound Bobby Begg; Richard Beymer and Russ Tamblyn were cast as Ben Horne and Lawrence Jeville simply because it suited Lynch to see the former anti-heroes of *West Side Story* re-united on screen, and roles were regularly adapted to fit actors that Lynch particularly liked — meeting Joan Chen inspired him to rewrite the role of an Italian maid; Giovanna (originally paroled for his then-partner Isabelle Rossellini), as the Chinese Jessie Pasterk.

Cast and crew assembled in late '88 in the location town of North Bend, Washington State, and filming of the pilot took place over a winter of record-breaking blizzards, of blizzards and freezing fogs that regularly postponed shoots and added to the sense of otherworldliness permeating the set.

"David's way of working was unlike anything I'd experienced at the time," says Kären Robertson, who played square-shult's secretary Lucy Moran. "David was mediating every afternoon, and he'd conduct assemblies to get cast members on the same wavelength. He encouraged everyone to read *The Power of Myth* by Joseph Campbell, and I remember a lot of us started living strange dreams. It was definitely a different consciousness to your average television set."

But if there was a sense that they were creating something special, there was also a nagging concern that the finished product would be too leftfield for the conservative commissioners at ABC.

"We were amazed they were giving David Lynch two hours on television," says Kyle MacLachlan, looking only slightly older and better than FBI Special Agent Dale Cooper. "We

saw it as the inmates communiting the town, and we knew it would be fantastic, but we thought that would be the end of it. We didn't think for a second then it would get picked up because it seemed so incomprehensible."

MacLachlan's concerns were unfounded. After mixed reactions to test screenings of the pilot, ABC commissioned seven episodes — a partial vote of confidence that suggested they were wisely inspired to be working with Lynch — and reluctantly agreed to the director's condition of complete creative freedom from the network.

Shooting relocated to a former warehouse in the San Fernando Valley that Lynch had decked out with Diner set-dressings, allowing cast and crew to pass from the Double R Diner to the grand lobby of the Great Northern Hotel in a few easy steps. Guest directors were cherry-picked to oversee individual episodes, but Lynch and Frost continued to write the show, which dissolved into a mixture of drug taking, underage sex and supernatural evil so dark that many feared it would be axed before it aired.

Those fears dissipated on April 8, 1990, when the word-of-mouth buzz surrounding *Twin Peaks* saw the pilot score the sort of viewing figures usually reserved for the Super Bowl. The show's popularity accelerated as the season progressed — its layered mysteries combined with a Thursday night slot to make it the perfect water-cooler conversation for office workers the following morning, a fact played upon by a slew of publicity posters claiming, "If you miss it tonight, you won't know what everyone's talking about tomorrow."

Not that watching it was any guarantee of understanding it. Not even cast members were sure to their own deepest sources: actors were given scripts for their own scenes only, and would gather in an LA bar each Thursday to watch the show en masse and marvel at its twists and turns with heads of admiring locals. Theories abounded, rumour mills went into overdrive, and a telephone helpline (voiced by Kären Robertson in character) was set up to satisfy those who couldn't wait a week for further clues. →



"I remember, about halfway through the airing of the first season, someone came in and dumped on my desk maybe 800 pages of internal chatter about the show — and this was at a point where the internet was only just emerging as something people used for basic communication," says Frost. "But here were these online forums dedicated to unpacking just one aspect of plotting, something that had taken maybe 15 minutes to think up. That was the point when I realized this had become more than just a television show, that we'd tapped into a collective unconscious."

Before long, "Prairiemania" had turned into a bona fide cultural phenomenon. "People couldn't stock enough cheap plastic clear bags were carrying logs in tribute to the cryptic Log Lady; and grocery stores half mock Laura Palmer funerals in which whether or not gobs would wrap themselves in plastic and lay down for hours at a end,"

Elsewhere, the female leads of *Twin Peaks* lined up for the cover of *Fusing Style*, while Lynch found himself celebrated as a genius on the front of *Time* magazine. MacLachlan, for his part, was dragged on to *Saturday Night Live*, guest hosting an episode that went up to weaker aspects of the show. The audience's laughter concealed their hope, however misguided, that the actor would somehow slip up and answer the question on everybody's lips: who killed Laura Palmer?

That question, on which the show's early success had been founded, eventually led to its downfall. ABC wanted the mystery of Laura's murder resolved quickly — some suggest they were sceptical of sustaining public interest in the subject, others that they found drawing it out would lead to rioting or supposed killing. Either way, they commissioned a second season of 22 episodes on one condition: that Lynch reveal the killer's identity at the first available opportunity.

The master was something neither Lynch nor Frost wanted: solving the mystery was, in Lynch's words, "killing the goose that laid the golden egg." The pair had gone to extreme lengths to keep the culprit's identity a secret, from numbering scripts to writing and accidentally shooting take scenes. When they finally capitulated, they timed the unmasking of their secret killer before tackling one on to the end of the episode and sending it to air. Only then did they sit down with actor Ray Wise and tell him that his character, Leland Palmer, had murdered his daughter — a revelation that Wise was inclined to accept, not least because it was followed by his character's death and exit from the show.

In some ways, Ray was the lucky one. Lynch and Frost lost interest in the wake of the revelation — Lynch heading off to direct *Mulholland Drive* in Storyville — leaving the final 12 episodes in the hands of guest writers and directors who struggled to regain the transmission lost by Leland's confession. The show became characterized by editless cameos (David

Duchovny as a cross-dressing FBI agent) and storylines (Betty Draper's campaign to save the local girls' swim team), making a self-parody of its own subtle series of the macabre, and ending it closer in tone to the mainstream soap operas it had previously outmoded. As audience figures plummeted, ABC shifted *Twin Peaks* to a graveyard Saturday night slot in a barely concealed effort to hasten its end, and a sense of alienation took root among a cast that had so recently been there like a family.

"I remember sitting in my dressing room listening through the wall to Catherine Coulson (the Log Lady) calling David and begging him to come back," says Kimmy Robertson. "I remember a sense of panic and a definite feeling of abandonment. It was as though God had put us in Edie and this left us to fend for ourselves."

Lynch returned to oversee the end of the second season, writing and directing a final episode culminating in a series of cliffhangers that he hoped would entice ABC to commission a third season. But it was too little, too late. The network seemed happy to be rid of a show that it had never known quite what to do with. Many cast members breathed a sigh of relief when the curtain came down.

Like any major event, the effect *Twin Peaks* had on those involved in its creation was far from uniform. Some, like Kimmy Robertson, swore allegiance to its memory, attending annual festivals and making herself available to fans; others, like Michael Ontkean (Sheriff Thurman), refused to speak about the experience, phrasing when it came up in interviews and blurring the show for the subsequent downturn in their careers. Even MacLachlan tried to distance himself from his character, requesting only a bit part in Lynch's 1992 prequel *Twin Peaks: Fire Walk With Me*, a movie received with hostility even by hardcore fans for its heavy-handed dramatization of the last days of Laura Palmer's life.

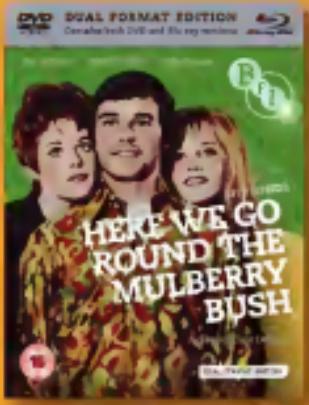
And yet the legacy of *Twin Peaks* seems barely to have diminished. In the decades since the town beauty was first fawned on the riverbank, wrapped in plastic, it regularly tops lists of the best shows of all time, and its influence can still be felt in more sustained television success stories like *Lost* and *The Sopranos*, many of which might not exist were it not for Lynch's vision of a world in which art-house moviemaking and mainstream television worked hand in hand.

"*Twin Peaks* was way far ahead of its time," says Charlotte Stewart, who played Betty Driggs. "It was a completely immersive experience filled with incredible characters and sneaky secrets, and it had this dreamy quality thanks to its bizarre dialogue and haunting soundtrack. But it was a show that demanded viewers approach it with an open mind, and it expected them to pay attention. Nowdays those things are taken for granted with ground-breaking television, but back then I don't think people were ready for it." 

# THE KIDS ARE ALRIGHT



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# Cyrus

Directed by Jay Duplass, Mark Duplass  
Starring John C. Reilly, Marisa Tomei, Jonah Hill  
Released September 10

**F**ans of the Duplass brothers will be pleased to learn that their first studio picture doesn't bury their indie roots. With Sacha Baron's favorite the oddball road trip comedy *The Polyglot* and quirky comic home *England*, the brothers established the "Duplassian Method" — shooting a script chronologically and allowing the actors to develop their own dialogue. It makes for believable characters and a rewarding narrative presented in a cinema-vital style.

The profile siblings' latest introduction is to John (John C. Reilly), a crumpled loser stuck at the grip of a middle crisis. But when he probes a birthday-party regarding to the Human League's "Don't You Want Me?" into a talk at a birthday reconnection with Molly (Marisa Tomei), he can't believe his luck. Then he meets her son, Cyrus. Jonah Hill proves there's more to his career than that house-for-gage with a broadeningly underdressed chapter ("Don't fucking move!" he yells). But should we laugh at or pity this sonsof that momma's boy as he desperately tries to make them a crowd? The result is a film of blank laughs as Cyrus goes toe-to-toe on home turf for Molly's affections.

Cyrus' first encounter with John echoes the

undercurrent of menace in Jim Carrey's *Gable Guy*. Mastering the controls of his home media, he blows his opponent away with a monologue club of progressive banter we later learn is called "Sorority A-Style of Two and Three." It's small wonders like this that make the film's world so immersive.

After a period of dubious script writing (including gigs for Sacha Baron Cohen's *Bruno*), and having established himself in the *Apartment* ensemble, Jonah Hill has now definitively moved on from his breakout role in *Superbad*. The actor also has aspirations to direct, and for a lover of imperfection he better be keen on that, since the masses of ensemblecast<sup>2</sup> The Duplass brothers provide the perfect scene for Hill and Reilly's verbal sparring, and they're ably supported by both Tomei and Catherine Keener as John's par-upon ax.

Much like another middle comedy, *Ghostshop*, the film's domestic setting is a fitting backdrop that allows the actors to draw in as with each outside instance, whether it's Cyrus visiting Molly's sympathetic but too tight son or an unprepared John receiving a razzmatazz in fished-up and dysfunctional behaviour. Shooting with the RED camera, the director's use of digital techniques

is reminiscent of Lars von Trier's experimental black comedy *The Best of *It's All**, brightening our engagement with the characters as a staircase room home in on every emotional detail.

*Cyrus* is a film about letting go, losing inhibitions and following new paths — the kind of choice regularly manifested by home-blazed Hollywood rom-coms like under the sophisticated guidance of an expert cast and crew, here it proves both charming and enlightening, with a mix of observational humor and heartbreak that says with you. **Dan Brightmore**

**Anticipation.** Can mumblecore go mainstream? We're intrigued. 4

**Enjoyment.** Laugh-out-loud one minute and thought-provoking the next. Perfectly crafted. 4

**In Retrospect.** A fresh approach to the relationship comedy that will reward repeat viewings. 4

# Dog Pound

Directed by **Kim Chapiron**

Starring **Adam Bouchard, Shaka Kippel, Lawrence Boynes**

Released **August 27**

**A** 23-year-old Ray Whistone measured himself to the world in Alain Clark's *Stone*. Made in 1979, the tagline described the film as "a brutal story of today" — a bleak portrait of a country that had turned its back on working-class young men. *Stone* wasn't just provocative — it was startling.

What does *Dog Pound* mean? This US re-enactment of *Stone* follows three young offenders — Bouch (Adam Bouchard), Davis (Shaka Kippel) and Angel (Marco Montiel) — as they serve as a young offenders inmate run on the ground by a gang of violent inmates. Both Bouch and Davis are cargoys for the gang, only for Bouch to reject with single-minded intent. As he plots to become top dog in the penit, his endless streak puts him on a collision course with both his fellow inmates and the authorities.

Although it echoes the narrative arc of *A People*, *Dog Pound* has none of that film's unflinching subtlety or interior life. For all its sense of realism — casting actual youth offenders and shooting on location — Kim Chapiron's film is far more interested in displaying aesthetics than gritty reality. *Dog Pound*



is an action film in disguise, where every shot and drop-kick on the canvas are while's circling cameras lovingly document the stately sequences of cut-throat masculine violence.

That the film should be so compactly stripped of substance is all the more disappointing when you consider the Chapiron's gift of French New-Cinema, and is responsible for some of the most vital and controversial filmmaking in the country.

Yet *Dog Pound* has nothing to say about the issue in Offender's America. Nothing to say about the links between violence and authority. Nothing to say about the corruption of good people in a rotten system. In the absence of content, the film becomes a wacky trip through the clichés of prison drama: age, race and all. **Matt Bachenelli**

**Anticipation.** *Stone* updated for a new generation by a director whose French-language work has pushed the boundaries of good taste. **4**

**Enjoyment.** Despite a certain sterility, *Dog Pound* is finally preoccupied with visual impact rather than dramatic meaning. **2**

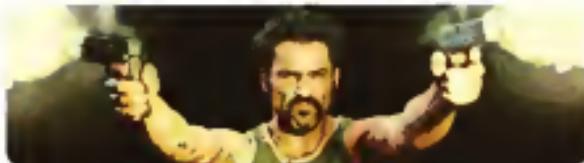
**In Retrospect.** Kim Chapiron could make a seminal film about today's youth, but this isn't it. **2**

# The Horde

Directed by **Yannick Dahan, Benjamin Röcke**

Starring **Claude Piron, Jean-Pierre Martini, Eric Khomaneh**

Released **September 17**



**L**ike a thermometer up the picture, horror flows in a quick and unpleasant way of warming movie's tails. And if the recent spate of angry, ultra-violent French efforts (Merry, *Portrait*), *Final* fail to be burned, you'd have to conclude that recent tensions and right-wing legislation are resulting in an astringent storm brewing across the Channel.

The movie looks back to early Romero in its depiction of a horde of ghasts brawling with ultimate savagery. "I'm a fucking *Nigga!*" savages Adelard (Eric Khomaneh) in the bushes out a zombie's brains. But in these godforsaken prospects, everyone — whether policeman, gangster or monster — is either mangled or an outcast.

More a background concern than a coherent line of enquiry, these stories still add a lesson to the non-stop action. Auras (Claude Piron) and Ousmane (Jean-Pierre Martini) are double-decker tappers on a mission to avenge the killing

of a colleague; Adelard and co. are their targets. But before whatever honor they have left can be satisfied, the grisly high-octane they've inflamed is overrun by massacring stuff.

Imagine Romero mocked by John Carpenter and you have some idea of the blood-and-explosive mangafest that follows. Bumma explode, brains fly and black blood soars the skywards. One day's so angry he shoves two zombies in the face at the same time — impishly. Meanwhile, in the distance we see Paris aflock, storm clouds gathering and other infections that the world's going extremely to hell.

It's a horrific, broad film, a movie on the nerves that might have benefited from a little breathing room — when the cold-snorting nitro-bomb isn't getting torn to pieces by zombies, they're tearing rags off each other. Though accessorially gory, the film's over-pumped opulence remains consistent throughout, with no *24 Days Love*-style

happy-dappy cop-outs.

For a multitude of (horrible) reasons, the film's apocalyptic sequence sets the survivors misconstruing their creating a female zombie, who it appears they're going to rape. Even Romero never looked on the human race with such unfeigned disgust. Let's pray that pretender reading proves way off the mark. **Matt Glusker**

**Anticipation.** *Assault* on *Assault*. **3**

**Enjoyment.** *Assault* on *Assault*. **4**

**In Retrospect.** *Assault* and *butcher*. **3**



# Charlie St. Cloud

Directed by **Burr Steers**

Starring **Zac Efron, Amanda Crew, Augustus Prew**

Released **October 8**

**Z**ac Efron graduates doing an early come on *Charlie St. Cloud*. But it's best you take that literally safer than figuratively — Disney's teen angst boy may have stepped into another face-locking drama with due adaptation of Ben Sherwood's novel, but he's not quite sure of the Mouse House yet.

Reunited with *17 Again* director Peter Sarsgaard in the spousal St. Cloud, Perico, right down to his belly blues and more belly button, he's the boy-making brother you always dreamed of having: sensible, playful, sensitive. Quid it in, then, for younger sibling Sam (Charlie Tahan), who Charlie loves over like a father (out-breaking his love, cooing him in hand) "Gosh, that boy is just too good!" gripes future love interest Tess (Amanda Crew), and you almost feel her pain.

Fast-forward five years and Charlie's now really comfortable. Sam's been killed in a car crash. Charlie is drifting, talking to dead people and working as a gardener instead of following his dreams. Are his visions of his dearly departed brother's a result of Charlie's splintered psyche, or is something altogether more mysterious afoot?

So far in shooting, Wince-inducing dialogue

and ("We can't just sit on hold, Charlie, it doesn't wait for us") advice black-and-white (even Ken Bone gets early on), *Charlie St. Cloud* begins back and bumpy — all dust of the Rite Aid nursery and motherly Rivers (the irreverent auteurist that claims Sam's life is deftly handled, as Sarsgaard allows the crunch of musical and the splatters of blood to hit us right at the face (you'll be glad it's not in 3D)).

But while that no-holds-barred approach initially works, it soon drives the film into horrific waters. A third act U-turn (oh, forget, ditching the drama that came before, while further squelching happenings at the film's cleverer summer St. Cloud entirely).

Not that Mouse can be blamed on Efron. Quite the opposite — the 22-year-old attacks the material fearlessly, offering his most mature performance to date. It's a definite move in the right direction to complement Mr. and Mrs. Billie Sudler, the dialogue devotes into such incoherence that only plucky Ben Augustus Prew (dark Aaron Johnson crossed with Russell Brand) manages to buoy it with his off-kilter cock-n-roll delivery. It's the kind of "susan, carefully" discourse typical of the very wised men that Efron is clearly running to escape.

Not a bad week, then, with costal younglings Efron, Crew and Prew easily shouldering their dramatic share. But in its desperation to move audience members to tears, *Charlie St. Cloud* forgets to bring a heart for itself. **Josh Winkler**

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**Anticipation.** Efron ditched the *Twilight* remake for this Good sign? 3

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**Engagement.** Expansive baritone shows tend *Charlie St. Cloud* an elegant sure shot's as easy on the eye as its lovely young stars, but the script needed more of a buff. 2

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**In Retrospect.** Efron excels at proving he's leading-man material. But sign-post scoring and drill-'em-home emotional beats weigh things down. Rubbish ending, too. 2

# Robin Williams

## Stand-up Guy

Interview by Ellen B. Jones

**O**ver the course of this conversation, Robin Williams will break into a total of seven different impersonations, including a Russian accent, a rather poor Sean Connery and a HAL, who, once you get so long, it eventually becomes silly (at which point, he really gets silly).

By the standards of Robin Williams, most of a thousand odd voices, this is, of course, fairly unusual. He's probably a little fatigued because it's the last interview before lunch, but perhaps we the audience to the movie that's brought us here. Today, Williams is riding in his Kensington hotel room to promote a movie which requires an out-of-timing Scottish accent, singing gongs or commanding audio pronunciations – just himself, the actor, playing an ordinary, unacted human being.

He's here to do the dual film *Directed by Ensemble* (read-up Robin Goldblatt, a friend of Williams') since they met on the West Coast comedy circuit in the '80s. Williams originally told Goldblatt he might consider using the Hollywood clout to help him get roles. "When he did *Shaker the Clown* [Goldblatt's 1990 directorial debut], I played Jerry the Movie as a favor, and it was like, 'Let me see what I can play.' Then I thought, 'No, actually, this is really good...'"

Goldblatt's first two films chart, respectively, as скользкий-девки and a woman who performs a sex act on her dog, hold off the call as a maker of paranoiac yet surprisingly sensitive comedies. *World's Greatest Dad*, which deals with the aftermath of a death via amnesiac reapplication, is certainly no bid for the masterpieces. Williams' car is Linda Clayton, a high school teacher of uninspiring poetry, plagued by unfulfilled literary ambitions, a slightly goaffred and a usually decent human soul. Unlike so many recent projects, Goldblatt's usage never reaches Williams' comic gifts beyond amusing and into annoying, limited, yet perfectly showmanlike overexposure.

The mix seems calculated to fit his appearance, talents and even past career. "It's like *Despicable Me 2*," Williams jokes. It was an unintentional parallel, he insists, but accidental or otherwise, Williams hasn't had such interesting material to work with in a long while. As Linda he must embody

crushing disappointment, growling banalities and self-wrenching grief, while performing a balance of humour as pitch – and his exiles.

When the young Robin Williams graduated from his theatre course at the prestigious Juilliard School of performing arts, a career in acting was not what he had in mind. He sought dramatic roles and it was only when they were understanding that he took a desire into stand-up. "Desirability, the in-between state," he says. "Play the guy under 'Save, done in.' The asshole friend? 'Okay, if you need me, The Brown guy?' [How he breaks into a British accent] 'Save, that right there?'

"Desirability," he says, because this stage of Robin Williams as a polished stand-up is not one most observers of his 30-year movie career would recognize. There have been numerous drunks. *The Good Morning, Vietnam* (1987), *The Player* (1992) and *Good Will Hunting* (1997), but the Williams breakthrough finds on a likable man of comedy and family like *Die Hard* (1988), *Aladdin* (1992) and *Mr. Holland's Opus* (1995), culminating in a series of films in the late '90s so incisively successful that a critic reviewing *Directed by Ensemble* in 1999 was moved to call him "the Aristotle of sentimental comedy, never cynical." When Williams launched into little inane pleasantries (Jumanji), giddy-voiced mirths (*One Miss Piggy*) and descended like TV presenters (*Death at Sadora*) in 2002, it was a Hollywood first from the campsite.

"I thought, 'I can't keep playing the same part,'" Williams admits. "At this time things were starting to feel limiting. You just play over and over again? The kind of child character? No. You've got to break out of that otherwise you're doomed." But if his decision was a conscious one, it wasn't, he admits, permanent. "That wasn't a running point. It's about like a virus: once, like a nice virus, there are great ups and great downs."

He personal life in the following years provided plenty of reasons for him returning to this career reiteration. After 20 years of solitude, he suffered a relapse in 2006 and checked himself into rehab, then his brother passed away the following year, his second wife filed for divorce in 2009 and the claque on the tragedy cake was his emergency heart operation last year.

Not that you'd have any inkling of Williams'

## Select Filmography Robin Williams

<i>World's Greatest Dad</i>	(2009)
<i>Night at the Museum</i>	(2006)
<i>Enchanted</i>	(2008)
<i>One Hour Photo</i>	(2002)
<i>Bicentennial Man</i>	(1999)
<i>Patch Adams</i>	(1998)
<i>Good Will Hunting</i>	(1997)
<i>Mrs. Doubtfire</i>	(1993)
<i>Topsy</i>	(1992)
<i>Dead Poets Society</i>	(1989)
<i>Good Morning, Vietnam</i>	(1987)
<i>Popeye</i>	(1980)

personal recall does his work. "I don't talk about my own life, but that's other people where that's their expertise," he says. "I have a friend which I write that comic about his chivalrous marriage and his wife is there in the audience every night. I'm like, 'Please do you do that?'"

Williams' trademark comic style – the wildly energetic union of impat and impatience – always seemed less about revealing his true personality than deflecting attention away from it. But he clearly admires Goldblatt, suggesting how several years outside status of the limelight, for Williams, who's breaking doesn't seem as naturally "the more kind of reaction about it. I think, 'OK, I can't do that.' Then someone will talk about it and, usually because it's something they've been through, they can get away with."

Unlike most professional show-offs, Williams does not come across as in order, or even particularly confident. In a spirit of modesty, he's quick to anticipate any criticism, however vaguely applied. "People ask, 'Why did you end up *Die Hard*?' he says, before the subject has even come up. "Because it's page 100. You've just got out of what *Good Luck*. You've got to get out of this." Then, without leaving room for my interjection, the movies start spilling out. "It was also a chance to work with John [Hurt], who I adored. It was meant to be something to take you kind and have a good day."

Perhaps those three also serve a point of focus between the comic chitchat-ing world. "It's not even a comfort zone," he insists. "It's more comfortable doing this movie with Bob than the other ones. Because on those ones there's a pressure. The movie has to do a certain number for it to be okay. With this movie, Bob said, 'I have no illusions that this will open the show.' Bob is a weird guy in fact. It's allowed him, hopefully, to make the most money. And that's cool."

Perhaps, as it turns out, Goldblatt has deserved Williams a favor. The director may have needed a big name to get his project made, but Williams also needed someone to come along and then his out of a career run. Like two comic book impersonators in the same profile-led Hollywood mystery, they collaborated to find an escape route. But can Williams make it on the outside? That remains to be seen.



# World's Greatest Dad

Directed by: Robert Goldthwait

Starring: Robin Williams, Daryl Sabara, Morgan Murphy

Released September 24

You probably thought you could happily go through the rest of your life without ever seeing a made-Robin-Williams-dad-bombastic-a-communing-pool. You were wrong. And Robert Goldthwait, aka "the guy with the squeaky voice from *Police Academy*," is exactly the filmmaker to prevent it. In *World's Greatest Dad*, Goldthwait's dead-itis-in-entertainment Williams plays high school poetry teacher Lance Clapton, but that's just Sickey this is not. The drama of Lance's life are hardly worth carp-on, but dreams of a successful writing career have bitten him, his golfified firm shamelessly with all his colleagues, and he's the single parent of a vole teenage son on the point of expulsion from school.

The latter circumstance is most fully realized thanks to actor Daryl Sabara, who is perfect as Lance's son Kyle. Never before has such a scrawny, mischievous, pervert, such a show and miserable migraine slouched across our screens. Sabara, in other words, has raised adolescence. Despite being on the morning end of commas such as "it's bad enough having a teacher as a dad. Being one with no teacher is AIDS," Lance pounces him with equitable good humour until something truly awful happens

and all our expectations about what, exactly, is going on here go flying out the window.

Funnily, Hitchcock himself has ominous forewarnings of Psycho to prevent the plot's surprises. Less forewarning, Goldthwait banished reverences from revealing a key plot detail when *Sleeping Dogs*, his second film in 15 years, came out in 2007. Now, perhaps, less justified, and *World's Greatest Dad* confirms Goldthwait's membership of that minority of filmmakers whose work unfolds in genuinely unexpected ways.

That is such a rare quality that seeing a on-screen dad have the staged plausibility from which most mainstream films worse their narratives. And from an actor like Williams, so often associated with exactly the kind of unconvincing crudities that this film so deliciously unmixes, it's an commendatory performance.

Showing a due for the incongruous emotion, Goldthwait's film is full of moments that are exasperating yet thoughtful, challenging yet sweet. The scene where Lance breaks down crying at the foot of a newspaper's shelf of porn mags because they remind him of his son is hilarious, when he most valiantly to be happy for a successful colleague while

flailing to unpack his patients' upperwear load, it's exquisitely sad. But most triumphantly, by the time you witness Robin Williams' male chauvinist, you'll just know it makes perfect sense.

Cynical but never heartless, *World's Greatest Dad* pokes a hole in euphemism, machismo, inattention, and worldly success without ever smacking human behaviour beyond recognition for the sake of a cheap laugh. It's a comic masterpiece when Robert Goldthwait, content to be the pay-the-squeaky-voice-from-*Police Academy* and become the doyen of films that Jacob Apa's mother could make. *Ellen B. Jones*

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**Anticipation.** Goldthwait's last film didn't make much of a splash, but those who saw it were impressed.

**Engagement.** Funny, thoughtful and full of surprises.

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**In Retrospect.** We can't wait to see what Goldthwait does next.



# Police, Adjective

Directed by **Cornelius Popescu**

Starring **Dragos Bucur, Vlad Ionescu, Irina Savulescu**

Released October 1

**T**he masterfully crafted follow-up to the acclaimed *12:00 East of Bucharest* – a key work in the renaissance of Romanian cinema – *Police, Adjective* is a brilliant black comedy about language, power and law enforcement. Offering an absurd yet deadpan meditation on bureaucracy and moral conscience, this Cannes prize-winning film also offers a witty and thoroughly astute diagnosis of the police state.

Crisu (Dragos Bucur, best known to UK audiences for a brief appearance in *Cross Poll*) is The Devil of *My Lorraine*: a young undercover cop who undergoes a crisis of conscience when he is pressured to arrest a teenager who, despite numerous warnings, continues to offer himself to his classmates. Reluctant to ruin the life of an otherwise decent and law-abiding young man he considers morally responsible, Crisu must either allow the arrest to be a burden on his conscience or face censure by his self-aggrandizing, totalitarian superior Anghelache like the unwilling Vlad Ionescu of *4 Months, 3 Weeks & 2 Days*, for whom the word 'conscience' has an entirely different meaning.

Inspired by the observations of a friend who disclosed his daily experience in the local police force, and by a headline-grabbing story involving a boxer

who informed an hi-jape-dealing sibling, Popescu makes a fizzy and yet deeply humanist approach to his material. Shot in the director's hometown of Iasi, the feel for characters, plot and landscape is simple, and in a exemplar of contemporary Romanian – with its white grounds, bareness and air of migration – the film is both acute and subtle.

George Ionescu and Anghelache's *Crash Up* is astute, Popescu documents the chaos of the state: Crisu by observing his daily tasks and tasks in real time. As we watch the policemen going about his life and fulfilling his professional responsibilities – most of which are mundane, mind-numbingly uneventful and almost worthless – we slowly come to grasp his moral and philosophical make-up and the colour to which he is forced to how to apply, possibly pedantic and persecuting, trade him as marked contrast to his colleagues and superiors.

Popescu's approach extends to the domestic scenes between Crisu and his partner, where everything is discussed and analysed, measured and inferred: considered. A conversation about toothpastes is particularly deftly played. In the film's already much-discussed first sequence between Crisu and Anghelache where, dictatorial as hard

stop, engage in an intense discussion of the meanings that can be attributed to words like 'morality', 'law' and 'conscience', Popescu gently turns *Police, Adjective* to its final comic and intellectual pay-off, and from mere 'satire' into something far more significant. **Jason Wood**

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**Anticipation.** The follow-up to *12:00 East of Bucharest*. One of the key works in recent Romanian cinema.

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**Engagement.** The writing, direction and performances are first rate. This affirms Popescu's reputation as one of the most exciting talents in European cinema.

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**In Retrospect.** Complex, intellectually rigorous and yet incredibly enjoyable on multiple levels.

4

4

5



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# Gašpar Noé

## Cinema Sadist

Interview by Martyn Conterio

**G**asper Noé is a kind man. He's a doyen of French cinema, but during the interview, explaining the long journey he has undertaken in bringing his movies, *Enter the Void*, to the screen. "Entered a holiday and to get back to real life. Some dreams say they'll take six months off and they cannot do it. I really could. It's been too long."

Eight years ago Noé unleashed one of the most shocking films of all time as *Infiniум Vérité*. His latest effort, although not as openly horrific and violent, still places heavy demands on the viewer.

As seems to be the norm, with a rapid-fire cricket soundtrack accompanied by blaring siren noise before segueing into a drug-addled delirium that is never escaping, *Enter the Void*, like eighty signs, is "A real mind-fuck."

Taking multiple inspiration from literature, his own drug experiences and psychiatric clinics – Ken Russell's *Altered States* is a major influence – the director runs riot with some of the most breathtaking imagery ever seen. It's a film one must fully submit to in order to get the most from. Described by the distributor as a "psychedelic melodrama", it unfolds in its own surreal allegorical space, a pharmacological land of hallucinations, re-remembered memories and distorted visions.

The *Tristan Book of the Dead* and *Lady in the Lake* might seem strange bedfellows, but these texts each provided something unique on which to base his new work. "I'd never seen what people call an 'adult project' on screen. I never had one myself, but I thought it would be very cinematic. You can tell by the end of the movie that it's not religious. I'm not a theist. I enjoyed portraying what an ultimate death could be before death. I think there would be far less narrative than say novels and stories, certainly more abstract. In the end, it's a very conventional movie. The style is experimental."

It took Noé ten years to flesh out the narrative (an early draft was set in the Andes) and the project

went through a series of evolutions and alternate scenarios before landing down in Tokyo to explore the *shima* (and hoodlum) landscape. Bond between an orphaned brother and sister: "It was very difficult to convince people to shoot in Japan. But people are much more attracted to Tokyo nowadays. The American Dream is gone and there's no fascination with American culture anymore."

On the subject of the close relationship between his two lead characters, Oscar and Linda, Noé really isn't concerned if people read too much into the meaning of their set-up. Despite his predilection for exploring dark desires and taboo subjects, he's adamant it's not about incest: "It's not an incest movie. They're hot and want to reproduce the family roles. He looks like the father, she looks like the mother. I wouldn't say there's a reason but the only way they can increase what they have would be as a couple, to have a young boy and a young daughter. Of course they never go that far. It's like a lost paradise that they are drowning in, but there's no sex between them in the movie."

The shamelessly Japanese shoot posed great logistical problems that appear to have taken their toll on the film's budget. *Infiniум Vérité* and its predecessor, 1998's *I Stand Alone*, were relatively low-budget endeavours. *Enter the Void* is an immeasurable, large-scale production in a foreign land. "I don't think I could go through such an exhausting shoot again. I won't make a movie this big for at least 20 years. Everybody worked so long and everybody worked so hard that there were tensions. If you want to make a movie, it's everybody's movie, and the movie makes people sick. But I'm very happy with the result."

His last two films both feature a running, floating camera style which moves with spiritual grace, as if the camera is an entity moving in and out of all surfaces and objects at will. The script Noé produced was around 100 pages long and focused on the visual aspects and set pieces.

## Filmography Gašpar Noé

*Enter the Void* (2009)  
*Infiniум Vérité* (2003)  
*I Stand Alone* (1998)  
*Cerone* (1990)

The most revealing scene takes place towards the end of the third act at the moon-bathed *Infiniум* hotel where all the main characters gather to look while their gonzoise glow and shimmer, illuminated in electric multi-coloured lights.

While Noé has only shot *Infiniум Vérité* with a three-page outline and improvised the rest, *Enter the Void* clearly called for a greater plan. Even now he admits that he's disappointed that he didn't get everything he wanted on the screen due to technological and financial constraints. "Shooting with a crane is very difficult and we had to invent some stuff and we didn't have any money," he sighs. "There were shots I wanted to do but couldn't."

Artistic experimentation dominates heavily in his career. *I Stand Alone* prepared audiences for his final descent with an onscreen warning followed by a timer counting down from 30 seconds to zero. Those who stayed saw a demented father rape and murder his mentally disabled daughter.

*Infiniум* further enhanced his reputation and won numerous awards despite receiving scathing critical reviews and dismissive reviews around the globe. It was a film nobody saw coming and caused an anger factor when screened at Cannes back in 2002. "*Infiniум* was done with the energy of the moment. It was comprehend and react," he now describes it today.

Asked about being a magnet for controversy, he seems unphased, slightly disengaged or perhaps he just doesn't care. After all, there is no harm in being controversial. "*Enter the Void* doesn't have the shock value of *Infiniум*." Not wrong. "There is no reason that a shooting – the cut itself, nobody expected that. In France, when it comes to sex and violence, people aren't so moralistic. But if I tried to make *Infiniум* today, I'm not sure they would give me the money. I might scare the financiers."

The eccentric world of Gaspar Noé is not for the faint-hearted or easily offended. *Enter the Void* only if you dare.



# Enter the Void

Directed by Gaspar Noé

Starring Nathaniel Brown, *Put de la Muerte*, Cyril Roy

Released September 24

**G**aspard Noé, a filmmaker with dazzling command of the medium, likes to mix shock tactics with depth of expression. He's often dismissed as just another *exploit* movie, a mutant in love with torturing audiences. Contemporary cinema's grand nadat.

*Enter the Void* is another near-inconventional act for 2002 rage-mongers rather than *Revolting*, but we are nevertheless forced to navigate a stomach-churning timeline of a man's journey through various levels of reality as he inches ever closer to death and reconnection.

Make no mistake, Noé's film is a hard slog, but one that is well worth the effort. Despite the *de rigueur* violence, explicit sex and general unpleasantness, this is a work of pure cinema – a term often bandied around but very rarely used.

Brother and sister Oscar (Nathaniel Brown) and Linda (Put de la Muerte) live in a drug-addicted stupor in semi-dilapidated Tokyo on the edge of community. He is a prize drug dealer having an affair with his friend's mother, she is a stripper and gaspar's moll. They are orphans who share an extremely close relationship in which

each appears to take on the role of father and mother. Noé never really suggests it is more than that, yet it probably won't stop people reading it as an incestuous coupling.

Around the half-hour mark, Oscar is shot by police officers on the batonade of the Void (gaspar's alter ego) as he sets up during a drug exchange. He collapses into the fetal position around a table腿 then launches onto a trajectory where past, present and future blur and coalesce into increasingly teleo-like heights.

As with the very best horror films, Noé wants a physical response beyond the standard emotional aversion. He's not asking salvo. He'd good and provoke with a floridly surreal of concussive tools. What satisfaction he gets from this is anybody's guess.

The great 'self' of *Enter the Void* is the experience of the journey seen through the eyes of Oscar. *Lady in the Lake* is a major influence. We see inside his head, his dreams, his thoughts, his nightmares and his history. Oscar or no, we see his soned face but mostly Oscar is in unison, stumbling, even slightly comic figure.

The true stars are cosmonaut-cinematographer Benoît Delé and the director's own camera operator Noé and his team. Delé's original camera movement is that bumpy, chaotic, edgy, deep, cranes, pan, spin and most weird body landscapes and an ever-distracting fantasy Tokyo. It comes between the hippocamp and nausereating.

In *Enter the Void* the ultimate impl. One could argue Gaspar Noé doesn't make films in all he makes endurance acts. Yet the feeling that this is a landmark moment in cinema is hard to shake. **Martyn Gostello**

---

**Anticipation:** Noé is back. Should we make a run for it?

---

**Engagement:** Nauseating and reveratory. Like being on acid, only not.

---

**In Retrospect:** It moves in mysterious ways.

# F

Directed by *Johannes Roberts*  
 Starring *David Schofield, Eliza Bennett, Ruth Gemmell*  
 Released *September 17*



**'F'** stands for 'fall'... in the case of Johannes Roberts' painfully contrived surface drab, at least. Upon hunting back a haul of else-issues, it's this unsatisfactory grade that sets off a chain of shocking events, starting with the swift riposte of a devastating headbut to courtesy of a disguised student. But that's, really?

Blame must lie on, we find Mr Anderson (David Schofield) everywhere with these and self-giving. Now a state-of-the-art divorce, he's况anged from his daughter and entirely ill-equipped to handle his class. His morning call to colleagues fell on deaf ears, but a hefty shot of fortification-so-pur is served up when a gang of hooded hooligans enter after hours and starts tearing sh\*t up.

For reasons Roberts never dares to reveal, these particular hoodlums have an insatiable bloodlust. As everyone knows, true hooligans hunt

in 'Memento Mori' formation with the lethal stealth of a pack of stamping lions, but such an evasive or explanation offered for the massacre that unfolds, Roberts must be marked down. So too for making an absolute, stumbling boccafuoco the film's chutz protagonist.

But while Anderson is hardly an infallible chap, the she-barked security guards, noisy headbangers and unaffordable dining of vulgar students that complete the vision he will only reinforce feelings of frosty indifference. Finally, Roberts has failed to have the first lesson of honour checks make the audience care.

The pacing doesn't help either. After the result of an intriguing set-up fail to flower, any sense of narrative sense is left to rot for the next 80 minutes, as each character is trashed down and packed off in increasingly grisly fashion. What's worse, the whole twisted chutzla is sharpened by an amateurish sub-Gonzo script that adds little

in the way of atmosphere.

With severely underdeveloped characters, gratuitous violence and a generic plot, *F* is among the worst of British cinema in the class of 2010. *Adam Woodward*

**Anticipation.** An intriguing title, but there's little else to feed expectation.

**Enjoyment.** Get the red marker out; this is similes, 1

**In Retrospect.**  
F-off

2

1

1

## Why Did I Get Married Too?

Directed by *Tyler Perry*  
 Starring *Tyler Perry, Janet Jackson, Jill Scott*  
 Released *September 3*



**A**merican film director Tyler Perry is hardly new on these shores, but over the pond his brand of low-key urban comedy is a very big deal. And so is wondering what the fuss is about as is for a ladsman, however.

Perhaps the answer was 'director was the States' best-kept secret' – Hollywood's much-hated career with an armful of box-office smash-bangs alongside a lucrative sideline in stage plays that make ratholes on the satanic theater circuit. Yet since came to the UK. To add to the mystery, his movies bypassed critics, finding success in the crass-uptight Christian heartland of Middle America's black communities. And if the time for returning characters, the now-deep-spoiling Southern matriarchs Madam, happened to be played by Perry himself, all went-for of them to do. What did the US see in this guy?

If *Married* is anything to go by, Perry's success seems mainly to have come from being startlingly uncharming. Others have done the same, but this crass-as-possible version of an X-Factor Christmas single

Perry is the black James Corden, controlling the puppet strings and poised of the callously conservative – is hardly reason to roll out the red carpet and welcome his arrival to the UK.

Boasting four unconvincingly bland couples arguing in their Bahamian holiday home for two hours,

at it a worrying procession of stereotypes (Janet Jackson is the over-achiever who can't look after her own life); maudlin, endless resolutions (one played out in front of a download display) and a adolescent focus on hot guys with their shirt off.

With all the typey that preceded Perry's arrival, no doubt fuelled by his production credits on crossover hit *Precious* – you can't help but feel underwhelmed. Is a shapeless plot and a chassis involving a comes from a screenwriter never seen the best he has to offer? That is dismaying at its most insipid – an efficient milking of easy emotion by a join-the-dot manipulator. Tyler Perry is our savior before he's arrived. *James King*

**Anticipation.** An American superstar finally hits these shores.

**Enjoyment.** Bits of utter predictability will be well satisfied.

**In Retrospect.** Over-hyped, over-here... And just over

4

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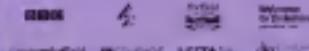
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# Jean Reno

## Gallic Gunslinger

Interview by Jason Goodyer

**F**or an actor whose stock-in-trade for the past three decades has been mature tough guys and redolent, hard-boiled heroes, Jean Reno is disarmingly innocent and unworldly in person. Reclining in a regency wing-back in Edinburgh's Caledonian Hotel, he peers down his hookahs through tiny biseau glasses, possessing his comments with fluent gestures and sloughing his shoulders as in the French can. Until the subject turns to violence, that is. Then he locks eyes in a fiery stare, shifts his weight to the edge of his chair and leans forward.

"Maybe people like to set odds of honest and non-violent men vs. evil guys, but I don't feel that way," he explains. "Sometimes who has done something bad has to be punished. Of course there are a lot of nice nice things we can talk about like God and charity, and it can be like a Czech saying, but the line is that these people kill and hurt people and that is not good."

Not, perhaps, the viewpoint you'd expect from someone who has made his name as Hollywood's go-to Gallic gunslinger. Whatever his personal opinions on violence, a quick glance through Reno's thick catalogue shows he performs better when he has a gun in his hand (*John, The Crimson Room*) than was (*Le Pianiste*, *The Pianist* *Pianist* remake). And for his latest role in Richard Berry's brutal, bloody gangster messer *thriller* *22 Bullets*, he has plenty of impunishments to prove it.

Loungy based on a real-life incident involving Marseilles' so-called "Last Godfather," Jeanne "Mad Jacky" Inboden, the film is a tale of friendship, betrayal and honour in which blood is thicker than water and those even more easily Rose plays Charly Marin, a gangland honcho who turns his back on the Mob in favour of a quiet assassin's agent with his dicing wife and two young kids in tow. Praise? Sarcasm? It appears, like offence or like defiance and the opening

cadences are barely over before he is slumped against her hotel-lobby Mercedes in an underground car park, a pool of blood, red blood sloshing around his touching-body. After making a Laemmle-like recovery, he spares his wife's place and heads off to make not some "firm's justice" on those responsible.

It's the kind of role Reno cuts for like wildfire and he carries it off with typical toughness. All jaw clenching and cold stares, Charly makes a gracious wear of menaces as he summarily executes those who turned against him. By all accounts, Inboden had a similar ability to ensue even hardened criminals quail in their tracks. But despite seeming like, Reno says he's kind of like of his performance on the methods:

"Richard said he wanted to make me but I didn't like the idea of inflicting somebody. We had dinner in his lawyer's house but he was not talking about much. He is old now, 75, but the fact that he was shot and survived is real. They told me he killed the people who shot him but nobody proved it. He was never caught by the police. People like that, who are old, aren't going to talk about their lives. He wasn't bragging, 'I've done that, I've done that.' A real movie doesn't like."

Whichever Inboden got up to in his renaissance, the film proves a distinctly unapologetic portrait of life in the Marseilles Mob. Inboden is loquacious and tattered-looking as the freezingly dead gangsters get up and die to death, while out-of-slap scenes wherein one legit in business slapping body parts from one unaged mafioso to another. It's gun-clearing stuff for sure but apparently Inboden himself found it all rather tame.

"Richard spent a lot of time with him to get the atmosphere and all the other things correct," Reno explains. "And after he saw the movie Inboden said we had made somebody who was smarter than him."

Whether it reaches Inboden's high watermark of sanguinity or not, Reno says it's the Inboden's responsibility

Select Filmography  
Jean Reno

<i>22 Bullets</i> (2008)
<i>Coupling Retreat</i> (2008)
<i>The Da Vinci Code</i> (2006)
<i>The Crimson Room</i> (2006)
<i>Krampus</i> (1999)
<i>Eden</i> (1999)
<i>Nihilo</i> (1998)
<i>The Big Blue</i> (1988)
<i>Subway</i> (1985)
<i>The Last Castle</i> (1983)

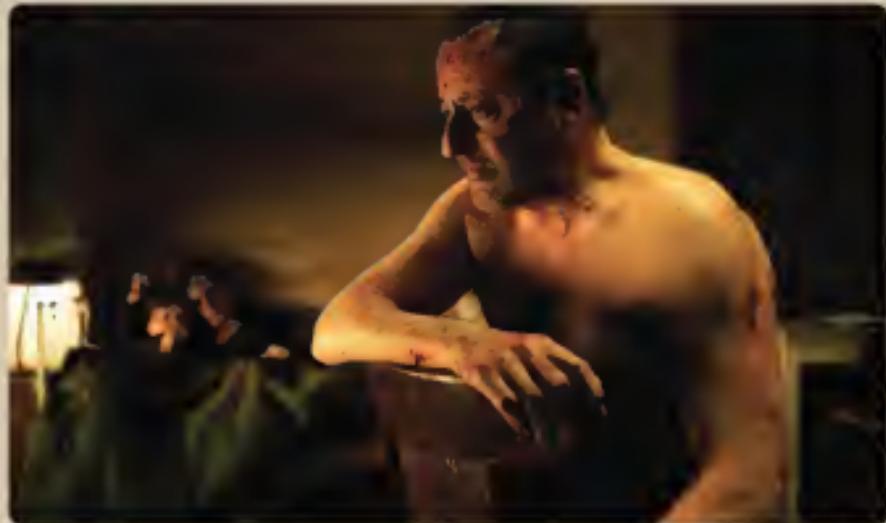
to portray violence on screen the way it is lived life: bloody and many. "The violence is necessary so that you know with whom you are playing," he says. "The challenge was to put the audience against the will through showing the violence of this guy and then to take them by the hand and make them say by the end, 'We make them accept his redemption. That was the goal. We couldn't do another normal mob movie, which would not have been very interesting. It was important to make the audience appreciate Mafei and give him a second chance."

Now 61, with a career spanning more than 50 features, Reno, unlike Mafei, shows no sign of calling it quits. But he too has a past he cannot seem to escape. It was 1986, such as *Stratton*, *The Big Blue*, *Nihilo* and *Eden*, made with director Luc Besson throughout the '80s and '90s, that propelled him on worldwide fame. And with Besson attached to his latest film as producer, the two seem destined to disappear like mentioned in the same breath. While he is unlikely to break into Besson's bedsheet during the night holding a Beretta, Reno can't resist taking a parting shot at his old colleague:

"The other day I saw a drawing of a porno-style being shot," he smiles. "There was a girl on a bed, a guy with the elements, a director and an actor with a penis like a sheath. The director was saying to the actor, 'Don't forget that I made you what you are.' That's my life as 15 minutes. It's exactly the reality. The director made her but he had the penis. It is Besson who made Robert De Niro, or in a word, Robert De Niro who gave his talent to make the movie to such a high level for Besson? What is a good question?"

Perhaps Besson was right, the past is never dead. Nor is it ever past.

Check out the full transcript online in the week of the film's release.



# 22 Bullets

Directed by **Richard Berry**  
Starring **Jean Reno, Kad Merad, Gabrielle Wright**  
Released **September 3**

**T**he opening fire menus of Richard Berry's *22 Bullets* may leave viewers wondering if the film has started or if the ads we see will roll. Soft piano chords swell in the background as a middle-aged don and his chronically scattered crew roll in an elderly limo, trading belligerent grins and loving looks as they go. Driving a long the picturesque *Cost d'Azur*, the limo stops along to *Puerto* while the son playfully kisses his chick. It's the sort of sickly sweet scene you might find in an advert for cold beer or capris, or a French retirement home. Until a load of broad-gauge gunfire follows them into a car park and shoves the man to peace.

Our father, it transpires, is Charly Mandel (Jean Reno), a former gangland boss who gave up his share of the business to spend a quiet retirement with his wife and children. But his former partner Tony Zadra (Kad Merad) wants him out of the way permanently, and after the last Showdown Mandel refuses and, ignoring his family's wishes, sets about taking revenge on those who brought him down.

The film proceeds to make the same vein as it began, swinging back and forth between scenes of

grisly ultra-violence and satirical comedy. Mandel is banging a hoodlum's head in a car door one minute, then playing happy families and making trite-cyphr speeches about memory the next. ("Gangsters are human too," seems to be the message.)

The script is loosely based on an incident involving real-life Marseille mobster 'Mad Jacky' Imbert, who was shot in a car park in *Crassa* in 1977. But rather than driving into Imbert's no doubt colourful past, Berry and co-writer Fabrice Delaporte and Alexandre de La Pouliière are content to use the event as the launch pad for a farcical thriller.

Reno brings his trademark savagery to the role, whether viciously gunning down bad guys or sharing his future plans with a stray cat at a nice comic interlude. But he's hardly stretching himself. Likewise Marion Cotillard impresses as a dedicated but disenchanted police officer, but like Reno she is fighting a losing battle against the clichés.

Berry does his best with a series of known action sequences that recall the work of producer Luc Besson. Making liberal use of crane shots, flat pans and choppy edits, his no-nonsense cameras dash in and

through a series of car chases, gunfights and close-quarter brawls.

It may be slick but the film lacks the spark of invention needed to make it above the mundane. The far too French gangster pastiche has been set high at late with Jean-François Richet's ambitious *Alors on danse* and Jacques Audiard's superlative *A Prophet*. Alongside works such as these, *22 Bullets* feels tired, unsophisticated and dreary. **James Goodfellow**

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**Anticipation.** JEFF REDDICK  
IN AN ACTION THRILLER. IT HAS TO  
BE BETTER THAN *COUPLES RETIREMENT*.

---

**Engagement.** IT'S close to get  
going and even then doesn't  
get very far.

---

**In Retrospect.** A generic,  
derivative gangster yarn

# My Son, My Son, What Have Ye Done

Directed by Werner Herzog

Starring Michael Shannon,

Grace Zabriskie, William Dafoe

Released September 18



**I**t's typical – you wait ages for a fusion film from Werner Herzog and then two turn up at once. But after the unbridled insanity of *Bad Lieutenant*, Herzog has turned down the metabolism to present us with a tale that has a positively smouldering and empty air.

Based on a true story, *My Son, My Son, What Have Ye Done* begins with the discovery of the elderly Mrs McCullum (Grace Zabriskie), who has been stabbed to death with a sword. Detective Hank Hirschorn (William Dafoe, remarkably restrained for once) soon discovers that her son-in-law Brad (Michael Shannon) is responsible and has barricaded himself in a house across the street. As a potential hostage situation develops, Hirschorn attempts to piece together the events that led up to the crime with the aid of Brad's father, Edged (Chloe Sevigny), and his absent director. He soon discovers a man slowly driven mad by a seemingly incomprehensible world.

Herzog once again returns to the themes that have driven him throughout his career – obsession and madness. And, as usual, the director is less interested in delving into the underlying causes of insanity and more with how it manifests itself. He's well served by Michael Shannon, who gives a powerful and intense performance as the lead role. With more than a hint of Klaus Kinski, his brooding presence and quiet manner continually demand attention. He's ably matched by Grace Zabriskie, who plays the brittle yet determined mother with an icy calm.

Reviewed by David Lynch, *My Son* is currently unlikely of some of his work (particularly in a scene with a dwarf that might as well have David Lee 'Tex' Willingham all over it) that is Americans as nightmares. While the nature of madness may not be understood, it seems an apt response to a world that is presented as mad, ginch and incomprehensible. Yes, for all

an undivided dread, Herzog will bring in moments of humour that balance the intensity on slow elsewhere.

This is familiar territory for Herzog, deferring with the usual air of wit and intelligence that make for a compelling crime drama and intriguing character study. Lawrence Hoppe

**Anticipation.** What He's done another one! Does he ever sleep? 3

**Enjoyment.** Unsettling but in a good way 4

**In Retrospect.** Will stay with you for a good while 4



**C**ouldn't hero Jonah Hex (Josh Brolin) refuse to drag guns for the strong lady's choice that leads to the death of his best friend, Jeb Turnbull? Queenie Turnbull (Megan Fox) holds Hex responsible for his son's death, exacting revenge by burning Hex's young family alive before setting the Turnbull breeding matriarch Hex's cheek.

Hex cuts the matriarch from his face, leaving a scabbed scar and gaping hole. Having stepped through death's door and been saved by a tribe of Native Americans, Hex is able to extract information from the freshly lifted before their souls ached. The natives' strength also lies in Hex is a master of curves, which gives him the power to inflict pain on anyone, whenever it suits.

While Turnbull's army of human fanatic mutations and plies to destroy the American way of life during Civilian subductions, the US Army

uses Hex's help to take down his enemies.

Directed by James Haywood, whose only other dancing gig came from *Dr Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas*, it's catastrophically clear that dancing Jonah Hill does not a Jonah Hex director make. What Haywood forgot is his intention from *Plan 9* is to be the company's friend-foolishness to story.

Chances of Megan Fox's cleavage and cleavage may attempt to reduce a lack of narrative clarity, but Haywood has printed too much hope on this childhood gem. Hex's relationship with Tot's broken-sofa-a-bean hasn't been built to any level in which an audience can invest, and supporting characters portrayed by name-sakes seem to out of place that instead of adding class to the production, they only cause confusion.

At just a blade over 70 minutes, at least the pain is over quickly. By reducing the strong category of the film

## Jonah Hex

Directed by James Haywood

Starring Josh Brolin,

John Malkovich, Megan Fox

Released September 3

and attempting to appeal to everyone, the production successfully appeals to nobody. What makes matters more maddening is that the owners can only say time we approach the type-of-gem that could have made the film a game-changer. Plus will feel deprived, longing for what's been excised. Dillon V Kotek

**Anticipation.** Solid comic-book foundation but poor word-of-mouth 3

**Enjoyment.** A disaster from start to finish 1

**In Retrospect.** At least it's relatively short. 2



# Tamara Drewe

Directed by *Stephen Frears*  
Starring *Gemma Arterton, Luke Evans, Dominic Cooper*  
Released September 10

**T**he bucolic splendour of rural Devon is undercut by an off-key note of emotional violence in Stephen Frears' *Tamara Drewe*.

Based on the comic strip by *Guardian* cartoonist Tony Sambrook, it concerns the economic misadventures of London journalist Tamara Drewe (Gemma Arterton), who is forced to return to the country village of her roots after the death of her parents. Her arrival in the rural community – shuddering a fence in during low-tide dinner slams – sets tongues wagging and hearts thumping, as Tamara reconnects with old beau Andy (Luke Evans) and lecherous local notoriety Nicholas Hardcastle (Roger Allam).

What could form here a straightforward tale of a girl returned and less less regal soul-mate gradually but inexorably into something both greater and more tragic. An amalgamation with a maniac-clashed rock star and the acrobatic acrobatics of two-horned menagerie complete the narrative into unchartered territory, ranging from the gentle sile of Ealing comedy into the darker realm of Hitchcock's *Rear Window*.

Stepping away the dashing veneer of sun-dappled privilege, Frears reveals a world of betrayal, desperation, bitterness and anger. Whether it's Hardcastle's emotionally abusive behaviour towards

his estranged wife, Andy's callous relationship with an exasperated husband, or an unapologetically graphic finale, *Tamara Drewe* radically interrogates the middle-class norms of Little England, and finds them wanting.

But there is a persistent problem with the material, and that is the character of Tamara herself. This supposedly high-flying career woman spends the entire film day-dropping from one man to the next, desperately seeking validation through sex. Her idea of independence is simply to drop one unbearable lover for another – not once does she appear happy or secure in her own skin. Indeed, her prospectus may London's media elite has nothing to do with any great talent for journalism, but rather a new job that transformed an uncharmed country girl into a sexually desirable, and therefore socially scippable, young woman.

Perhaps Frears is simply there to expose the edgy behaviour of the male characters, but then why content the narrative over goal of focusing on a passive cipher for nearly two hours? And besides, it's not just her. Hardcastle's wife Bess (Tamsin Greig) finds her tragic situation pointedly undermined by Andy's declaration that the poor woman "needs a man".

There's certainly nothing wrong with the performances. Gemma Arterton makes this herious blockbuster by doing some real acting, bringing an assured vitality to our neophyte heroine. Luke Evans is off brooding melancholy, while Roger Allam steals the show as the dabbled Hardcastle.

It's just that it's difficult to reconcile the titillating titillating tones. At its best, *Tamara Drewe* encapsulates a sense of deadening small-town anomie. The question is how seriously we are meant, or able, to take it. **Mark Bochenski**

---

**Anticipation.** Stephen Frears' eclectic career brings him to the English countryside 3

---

**Enjoyment.** Bright and vivid one minute, dark and ambiguous the next. What's going on here? 3

---

**In Retrospect.** Throws up more troubling questions than perhaps the filmmaker intends 2

# Jennifer Lawrence

## Devil Inside

Interview by Nick Bantock

**A**s Rev. Dolly in *Winter's Bone*, Jennifer Lawrence portrays an unplaceable 17-year-old heroin-dressed for winter at Missouri's harsh, stark extremes. Ratty beams by her own family as the investigate her father's disappearance from the world of meth dealers and casually shooting animals for food, she is an ingenuous, admirable young woman. So when Lawrence opens her London hotel room in a frilly low-cut blouse, short skirt and heels, it's something of a shock.

"I'm a big person on respecting gender," the 19-year-old breezily explains. "Even when we were in the airport, I didn't even know we were coming to London. I was like, 'Where are we going? France?' A stylist tells me what to wear, and I put this on."

Such publicity ploys are very different from her intense screen life. In 2009's *The Poker House*, Lawrence's character was rapidly her ping-pong in Guillermo del Toro's *The Burning Plain*, she later had another in a trailer. She has just co-starred with Mel Gibson and Joelle Foster in Del's recently titled *The Beaver*, suggesting steaming scandals. But *Winter's Bone* is her creative peak so far. She's at the heart of Oscar favorites, Lawrence built her in the middle of the pack when wading through her film projects.

"I thought it was bleak and beautiful in its own creepy sense," she says of the region. "The hills, the mountains, the trees were so bare because it was winter. The people are very close with their families, which the thing I respected a lot. I felt like I had to be respectful as somebody else's home, but they were very welcoming. I feel like they had mixed feelings when they saw the film. But I think a lot of people understood it."

The sense of looming dread that director Debra

Gornik builds in *Winter's Bone* comes largely from Lawrence's Rev — a short, slight girl who turns down body killers in a quest to find her father, with no hope of survival if they wish to sniff her out. "Yes, but there really wasn't another option. There really wasn't a way out of the situation — the made her an escape artist. She understood going into it that she might not come back. That's why she's such a home," Lawrence explains.

The actress shares Rev's southern forthrightness, listing her native Kentucky as her only home to pursue her professional ambitions. "Oh, yeah. I'm a southerner," she laughs. "I grew up in Kentucky than I moved to New York, then I moved to LA, and I grew up in all three. So I'm kind of a wild bird of human. I would never compare myself to Rev, but there's something similar in our journeys, even the way that I went through rates just to get this part — flying on a red eye to New York, walking into the audition going, 'Here I am again!' Because they fired me — they didn't want me, they turned me down multiple times. I'm not looking for an answer, and she also isn't looking for an option. I am very simple, young and naive in the way that I was about this, because my parents didn't want me to. They were like, 'Well, what happens if you're not successful? You need to come home because we're going to send you back to high school.' I was like, 'I'm not going to do that.'"

The intensity of each of Lawrence's roles has required conscious efforts to prove she can do something different. "I'm like, 'I'm an actress!'" she says, exasperated. "Just tell me what to do! I have never played a character more close to who I am in real life. I find it so amazing when people don't have enough imagination in us that I have no patience for studies. But if I'm lost out to people because they

## Filmography Jennifer Lawrence

<i>Winter's Bone</i> (2009)
<i>Death at a Funeral</i> (2010)
<i>The Burning Plain</i> (2010)
<i>The Poker House</i> (2010)
<i>Garden Party</i> (2010)

have a higher IMDb number. With the audition it's all about numbers, it's not about imagination. I remember one time I was auditioning for something by Michael Bay, and they said, 'Well you're the better actress but we think the other girl's cooler so maybe you should wear more revealing clothes next time.' And I was like, 'Not scare you! I'm not going to do anything where you have to make a tool of yourself like that. You probably shouldn't wear any of this. The getting hungry and need — could Revore the studies? I need studies for the business side of my life. I do have a good business sense. The artistic side comes when I'm making the movie!'

Growing up on the suburban edge of Louisville, Kentucky, Lawrence was always looking for a way out, and dreamed of different lives. "I was always day-dreaming of stories and I was always writing. I always had makeup friends at school that I would come home and tell my mom about because it would make her laugh. In real life people weren't so funny as the people in my imagination, so I just had to come up with more. One time there was a winter when we were in LA and I said some stuff to her and she told my mom, and she said, 'She's got a darkness inside of her!' And my mom, of course, being a Southern woman, thought that I had the Devil in me. But then I also wrote a lot of comedies that were weird, crazy and dream-like. I was all over the place."

That dream life has, as from, though, for the practical, outward access. "I've never lost myself, it's even when I'm filming. Because I don't need to go to dark places, and I don't need to research a drug role by going and buying crack, because I am just using my imagination and then do the same scene the same, and still be the same person. If it comes between sacrificing even a part of who I am and my money to make a role better, I would go with money."



## Winter's Bone

Directed by Debra Granik

Starring Jennifer Lawrence, John Hawkes, Kevin Breznahan

Released September 17

**D**ark and disturbing, *Winter's Bone* focuses on a family fractured from generations of self-sufficiency in Missouri's Ozark mountains. Addicted to crystal meth, their patriarch, Ira, is a woodcutter captured in leaf-clip detail by cameraman-photographer Michael McDonagh. A revealing opener shows the drug's horrific effects on the community, in two grandmothers laid up in reclusion and unemployable. This is a world of broken toys and dirty rags.

The effects of the drug force 17-year-old Ree Deltay (Jennifer Lawrence) to leave school; she's needed at home to care for her mate, depressive mother and two siblings. Her dad has been wounded — caught cooking crystal — and shipped out. Alone and penniless, Ree tries to join the army, only to be turned down. She wanted to bring her siblings along but she can't leave them, not even for the promise of the army's \$40,000.

Lawrence vividly carries the weight of this come-down role. With a face that rigs between ten defiance and tender youth, she owns every scene she's in — and that's every one. Supporting her, John Hawkes (as Ree's crusty, drug-addicted uncle) and

When a cop warns Ree that her father is missing and close to forcing her hand (the family home), she's on a closer hot to unearth him. Briefly ignoring violent threats to cover clear of the family business, Ree sets off to interrogate her favorite relatives about his whereabouts. She will find her dad, she tells them, dead or alive. Our mentor: Our mangled, Cox the deadly Thumper Malvern (Rance Holst) and a grueling bone-moving scene that will break your voluntary bones.

"Ain't you got no man who could do the like?" Ree is asked. "None's on I don't." It's a telling line, despite the beauty closest to Ree by her loss, director Debra Granik's innovation that a combination of local musicians — Baptist-band and perchance — close to the backwoods of *Winter's Bone*.

Granik's measured intention to detail insights into simple whiteness uses a dark and brooding drama. She lets local language and country run raw, spicing an old-fatherland quest with something more. We get close-ups of woodcutter, a mirror-of-face look at the underbelly of a bushy short squirrel (cleaner for Ree and the kids), and a peek inside an amateur party of woodchipped Ozarks crooning bluegrass balladings.

Rough violence is tempered by defiance/losses. In an early scene that highlights their poverty, Ree represents her little brother for covering their neighbor's berry stand. "Never ask for what ought to be given," the mantra. Sure enough, that night they receive a fine dinner.

But everything else is upfront threat, and the film ends with maniacal. It's unmissable. **Georgia Holtis**

---

**Anticipation.** This Southern Gothic yarn moved to Sundance, Berlin and Edinburgh.

**Enjoyment.** Like Fred Wimerson filming a Dennis Tarto novel, a curious edge-at-the-seat

---

**In Retrospect.** Think a film like *Dark Harvest* offers insights into a creepy life in the poor South? *Winter's Bone* will make you see the light.

# Dinner for Schmucks

Directed by Jay Roach  
Starring Paul Rudd, Steve Carell, Stephanie Szostak  
Released: September 3



**A** loose adaptation of the 1995 French film *The Dinner-Game*, *Dinner for Schmucks* is an awkward comedy of errors with a sense of humor that's as subtle as a sledge on a polar bear.

Paul Rudd assumes a familiar gape as Tim, a go-getting executive who has his eye firmly set on snatching a newly opened promotion. To get to the top, Tim has to negotiate a make-or-break business deal, but first he's got to find a date-night. Enter Barry (Steve Carell). A socially adept tuxedo-wearin', Barry's sort of hot but slow of mind, making him the perfect guinea at a dinner party hosted by Tim's boss, where whoever brings along the biggest weirdo gets his foot at the door to being top-dog.

To his credit, Carell does what he can to spit on you. You'd be hard-pressed not to find some compassion

for him. He's also so annoying you'll be overwhelmed by the sudden urge to smash out your eyes with a capped toothpick each time his nostril goes flukes up on the screen. Rudd doesn't fair much better. His ability to ground a bremance may have made him a star, but he's stuck and rapidly lost all a pppppp

And so we're left to suffer, right up until the moment the aforementioned dinner date finally winds around. It's here it moves overnight surfaces. For at the same time we're encouraged to dismiss those corporate shenanigans for taking pleasure in ripping their male peers, we're invited to do the exact same thing. When did the pachinko and doldrums of office become acceptable Hollywood punch-line material?

Tim's moral U-turn might try to counteract the film's meanderings, but by the time his facile

attempts at deliverance, the damage has already been done. *Adam Woodard*

**Anticipation.** *Roach* went from *Austin Powers in *Meat the Foot**; *Rudd* went from *Rocky Balboa* to *I Love You, Man*. Could go either way. **3**

**Enjoyment.** *Dinner for Schmucks* is a banquet for morons. **1**

**In Retrospect.** *Timeliness* is nothing. **1**

# Cherry Tree Lane

Directed by Paul Andrew Williams  
Starring Richard Blake, Tom Butcher, Ashley Chin  
Released: September 3



**A** caron's slow trach towards the front door of a lonely suburban home is both the first and last戛然而止 to be seen in the agonizingly claustrophobic *Cherry Tree Lane*. Inside, an unended potboiler over - in spasmic gear for all the soothng unknown that we about to spill out in this seemingly cosy domestic space.

The credits are already showing as forty-something Christine (Rosanne Beck) and Mike (Tom Butcher) settle down for a frosty dinner together. And that's before uninvited twin girls Ross (Jasmin Banas), Andi (Ashley Chin) and Teddy (Soraya Mokdad) burst into the house, briefly overpower the pair and leave them - and us - in wait, in real time, for the return home of their young son Sebastian, against whom Ross harbours a vicious grudge.

It is clear right from their violent entrance that these boys mean business, but that does not prevent them whisking away the time with unassuming docuseries TV (*Night of the Living Dead* is on,

naturally), food, drink, sleep. When more of their friends arrive, there's almost a party atmosphere except for the weapons, the presence of a hooded-and-bruised Mike on the living room floor, and the chilling absence of Christine, who's dragged screaming to an adjoining room by Ross. And then, for the last time, the doorbell rings again.

"You're gonna have some sort of love," says Andi - but *Cherry Tree Lane*'s determination to twist it, bringing very different classes and generations into explosive collision, and nearly assaulting the bourgeois norms of a society that prefers to keep its problems on the other side of the door.

"Confronting" barely does justice to a home invasion film that comes in comparison to *A Clash of Kings*, *The Lost Boys on the Left*, *Flanny Gains*, *The Great Silence* of *Robert Cormier* and *Edgar Allan*. With most of the sexual violence taking place beyond the camera's 35mm frame, the film remains as usually

restrained as Christine and Mike. The final image is one of hawking resolution, conjuring our own dubious feelings and frustrations to finish off a story that can never really end. *Amnon Blid*. **4**

**Anticipation.** From the writer/director of *London to Brighton* and *The Cottage*, anything goes. **4**

**Enjoyment.** Is it possible to enjoy squirming in your seat? Yes it is. **4**

**In Retrospect.** It is confronting, but also suspenseful, slyly interrogating the viewer's own yearning for justice. **4**

# Buried

Directed by **Rodrigo Cortés**  
Starring **Ryan Reynolds**,  
**Robert Paterson**, **José Luis**  
**García Pérez**  
Released October 7



**D**irected by the relatively unknown (but award-winning) Cortés, *Buried* is a high-concept thriller that makes strong Ryan Reynolds play Paul, a truck driver whose cargo has been attacked by insurgents. Walking in the dark to the sound of his own breathing, Paul realises he is trapped in a coffin with little more than a mobile phone and cigarette lighter for company.

And here the film will remain, demonstrating Paul's increasingly frantic appeals for help as American fatalities and dispassionate hostage rescue apparatus ticks into gear with agonising lassitude.

It is a concept that works brilliantly on paper – dramatic, poignant and suspenseful. And yet Cortés fails to realise the idea's potential from the off. Shifting from a variety of clever-clever angles to of overreacher to prove his chops, he breeds the status of

confinement, and with it the claustrophobic tension the drama so desperately requires.

With very little in the way of traditional action, the episode fails on Clark Spurley's screenplay to deliver a rigorous psychological drama. But in a script that needs to be tightly polished, there are too many little details every. Whether longing upon the police or alienating his estranged wife when he needs her help, Spurley repeatedly has Paul act in a way that simply doesn't ring true to the audience. Worse, he employs a variety of cheap tricks to pep up a flagging narrative, from Paul's phone signal failing on cue to the unlikely appearance of a snake.

At least Reynolds is engaging, bringing an impressive plausibility to the role despite his confinement. How you feel about the ending (which

really can't be discussed without spoiling) will depend entirely on whether his brevity charms more than it repels (despite the film's modest flaws). **Mark Schonbeck**

**Anticipation:** Can you watch Ryan Reynolds for 90 minutes? **3**  
We'll say yes

**Enjoyment:** Too concerned to deliver on an intriguing premise **2**

**In Retrospect:** The feeling of being trapped in a dark space will become all too familiar **2**

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# Rhys Ifans

## Dope Poet

Interview by Matt Ruchanski

**T**he greatest Welsh sex symbol since Tim Jones and Richard Burton, Rhys Ifans is uniformly posh. But over time he appears outside a *Murder* 100 documentary wearing nothing but his pants in the 1999 Richard Curtis film, the amorphically suspended one has accrued as much amazement for his love life as his film roles. There's the outside looking-in, the expression you get is that Rhys doesn't take any of it very seriously — he's too busy indulging in the kind of cocaine benders that would have made Marlon Brando envious.

But looks can be deceiving. "It becomes deeply troubling and frightening at times," is how Rhys remembers the press attention that accompanied his relationship with Sienna Miller — an affair that catapulted him into the global spotlight. Photographers stamped out on his doorstep, while urban rumors circulated through the gossip sheets. For a local boy from Porthcawl, it was an uncomfortable reality check. "It was a pain in the ass, to say the least," he sighs. "You had to wait for it to go away, you know? Or you knock it out of your way."

In contrast to the circus surrounding his love life, Rhys has had another serious relationship over the past decade, one that and now has slipped under the radar. As the story goes, he first met Howard Marks backstage at a Super Bunny Animalia gig shortly after the ex-dope smuggler had been released from a US prison in 1999. The pair made a "pardon's agreement" that when Marks' forthcoming autobiography, *Mr. Nice*, was adapted for the big screen, Rhys would take the lead role. Fifteen years later, that's exactly what happened.

There are striking links between the two men. At the height of his career, Marks was a consummate actor, inhabiting 43 roles and slipping easily into whatever guise he needed to make sure that his dope got where it needed to go. He worked with the CIA, the Mafia, MI6 and the CIA. He travelled to Ireland, America, Canada, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Thailand.

"Howard was living an anonymous life, and he was being pursued by the authorities — two things that are not pleasant at any time," says Rhys. More than that, they both shared the experience of uprooting from a small Welsh town — Marks in Oxford; Rhys to London — and the terror and excitement that went with it. "My lesson was it is to leave a small town in Wales and here the world and all the opportunities it throws up laid before you," at Marks' part.

While he's admiring that his friendship with Marks didn't affect the way he approached the role, Rhys has an empathy for how that's impossible to resist. He's clear that "the whole drugs law thing" needs to be addressed — "It's of the spirit of thought where I think everything should be legalised and controlled," he explains, to stop the profits of the drug trade falling into the hands of "terrible and criminal".

What, demands the Marks? Howard where the conversation goes a bit there? Rhys has said in the past that "governments and law enforcement are the enemy of every poet", which is the ideal of resistance you'd expect from a self-starter. It might sound vague to say that Howard Marks would be pleased because he was a freedom fighter who'd been puffed — he was flying tons of dope around the world for other people to smoke, and maybe not all of them were as well-adjusted as him.

But there is fuel on the romantic image of the outlaw aristocrat. Marks, he says, was providing a "public service". He was supplying a lot of poe. It was the resistance, the basis of gaining away with it, of staying under the radar, of dodging the law — that's very subversive. Like all the great poetic tales, it's a *Boy's Own* story.

And what about the dope smokers who weren't paid? The ones who were just kids fucking up their hood? Rhys isn't interested. "That's a *Daily Mail* story," he says, wheeling out the oldman streak against anybody who dares question the legitimacy

— the kind of dope smuggling, "and that's not a film I'd be interested in being in or writing. Probably the most dangerous thing that Howard's dope did for me was to make them possibly fall off their bike because they were too scared."

Instead, his indignation is reserved for the Rangers administration and the US DEA who, he claims, deliberately made an example of Marks. "It was Nancy Reagan, that horrible 'Say No' campaign and the war on cocaine laws that were introduced by the Reagan regime," he argues. "Howard was, I think, the first time that cocaine law was used. They could just walk into any country and check out a folder, or someone they considered to be a dealer, and try them in the United States — that is one reason why it's such a bad idea."

"Although much of Howard's life is missing and exciting, to the police it's obvious that you can't believe it's happening to one guy, what I found extremely in giving Howard was how much of a prior he had on pay," Rhys adds. "When he was caught and sent to prison, how troubling that was. He was taken away from his family by a bullying American court and locked up. I was taken aback by how that moved me as an actor. That's the bit we tend to forget because his life leading up to that was so exciting. I think the film reminds us that it was awful what happened to him. If it wasn't for his stature and intelligence he probably wouldn't have survived."

Marks, of course, did survive and even thrived after prison. He returned to the UK at the right time, when the mid-90s *Animal* generation were looking for heroes. Marks was happy to play the part — selling out his enemies while lighting up in public. If the story is a *Boy's Own* adventure, then Marks got everything he deserved, and certainly the one that Rhys wanted.

Check out the full transcript online in the week of the *Blitz* release.

## Select Filmography

### Rhys Ifans

- Mr. Nice* (2006)
- Greenberg* (2010)
- The Boat That Rocked* (2009)
- Elizabeth: The Golden Age* (2007)
- Garfield 2* (2006)
- Enduring Love* (2004)
- The Salt of the Earth* (2004)
- Human Nature* (2004)
- Notting Hill* (1999)
- Twin Town* (1999)



# Mr. Nice

Directed by **Bernard Rose**  
Starring **Rhys Ifans, Chloe Sevigny, David Thewlis**  
Released **October 8**

In an unspoken tone, the biopic is a sultry little pleasure to explore the story of a strange or wonderful life. But it's ultimately more 'wonderful' when history is appreciated, or at least subordinated to an subject's spirit. Here, cinema becomes not just a mirror, but a kaleidoscope.

*Mr. Nice*, Bernard Rose's biopic of infamous Welsh dope smuggler Howard Marks, is strongest in its moments of psychiatric resonance. When Rose places Marks into a given screen with original '70s backdrops, the effect is a self-conscious and nostalgic paradox. It's in these moments of lateral content – walking through a liberated London or smuggling drugs in a boat from Ireland – that both Marks' story and the broader tale of the post-war singer can be told. In their absence, the film deflates.

At times it feels as if *Mr. Nice* is struggling with the same lack of identity as its protagonist, who adopted 43 aliases in his career in one of the world's biggest drug dealers. Early cinematographic tests reveal the kind of unpolished materialism that works as well in 'drag film' like Werner Herzog's *Bad Lieutenant*. Later on, Rose evokes a more unadulterated heart aesthetic before finally lapsing

into cartoonish finger-wagging. These styles never really coexist, and nor do they come to fruition on their own.

As Marks, gung Welsh actor Rhys Ifans never has the chance to develop a chemistry with Ian McEwan's DIA agent Lovett, who burns him obscenely across the globe. Marks needs to be chased by Lovett to lend his seductive sense of rebellion, riding and losing his family in the process. But Rose doesn't draw out that dynamic, preferring instead to focus on comic signature or Marks' comment-slapping shenanigans.

And these shenanigans are interestingly fascinating, considering the extent of Marks' drug dealing connections, which came to include the likes of the IRA, the CIA, the Medics and the British Secret Service. The film also explores some of the difficult realities of being an outlaw, not least an effort on family life and Marks' relationship with wife Judy, played by a wobbly-seamed Chloe Sevigny.

Mark's views on legislation are at best appears, though his relationship with IRA-affiliated terrorist Jim McCann – played with Ingathering and other comic endeavour by David Thewlis – introduces a disquieting note. McCann's erratic explosions are

the stuff from an otherwise overly rosy, non-violent perspective of the drug world, and it's a bummer for *Thewlis'* performance.

*Mr. Nice* isn't a bad bit of nostalgic celluloid but it does leave you wishing it had the guts to be more radical in its opinions. Like the dissident in one. As it is, it's a breezy, interesting biopic that doesn't really get under the skin of the man at the heart of the narrative: *Shelley Jones*.

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**Anticipation.** Rhys Ifans has his first lead role in this period piece he's been yearning to play.

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**Enjoyment.** Great performances and intriguing style but it's a shallow experience.

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**In Retrospect.** Die-hard Howard Marks fans and students will delight in this homage, but it's one that requires a little too much complicity.

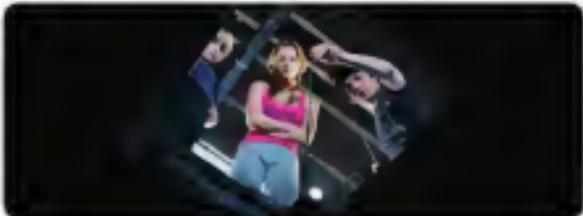
# The Hole

Directed by Joe Dante

Starring Chris Messina,

Haley Bennett, Nathan Gamble

Released September 22



**C**all it a fad, call it what you want, 3D is here to stay. And don't you bad things of filmmakers with a desire to exhibit in additional dimensions take their cue from Joe Dante. With his *Gremlins* and *Gremlins 2* already by far the best, *The Hole* might not seem like an obvious 3D prospect, but *The Hole* is exactly what the game has been crying out for.

There's a simple reason *The Hole* is head and shoulders above its contemporaries. Behind the glossy sheen of modern 3D, *The Hole* has a story remold firmly in the '80s. It's not quite *The Goonies* or *The Goonies 2*, but audiences of a certain vintage will no doubt remember the similarities.

The plot has a single mother (Geri Jewell) and her two sons relocate from New York to the sleepy suburb of Bensenville. While her eldest, Dan (Chris Messina), would rather never leave, he harbours

his younger brother Lucas (Nathan Gamble) sense of adventure and the pair set about exploring the new family abode. What's a pretty dull, safe for a mysterious butt-end-down trap door in the middle of the basement. After roping in their neighbour Julie (Haley Bennett), to whom Dan has unexplainably taken a shine, the brothers uncover an ominous plot and the adventure turns into an genesis begins.

What we do well about *The Hole*'s lead characters is that it often arounds a tough question: what would you do if faced with your greatest fear? It's a question our three protagonists must answer in turn, as they try to vanquish the evil they have inadvertently unleashed.

It's been a slight shortfall with this plot development, in that we are never quite so affected by these ghosts and demons as our protagonists. Still, the domestic slice subplot that turns the film towards a dramatic

climax makes up for my borrowed rightness and predictable drivel that precede it. **Adam Woodward**

**Anticipation.** Dante's near-irreducibility in recent years makes *The Hole* hard to get excited about. **2**

**Engagement.** An excellent family adventure with its heart in the '80s and its head very much in the here and now. **3**

**In Retrospect.** The perfect remedy for 3D fatigue. **3**



# Wall Street: Money Never Sleeps

Directed by Oliver Stone

Starring Michael Douglas,

Shia LaBeouf, Carey Mulligan

Released October 8

**G**rabbing his shiny gold Rolex and massive mobile phone, deposited capitalist titan Gordon Gekko (Michael Douglas) steps out of prison 23 years after Oliver Stone's '80s original to learn one of life's key lessons: the more things change, the more they stay the same.

We're back on the brink of the 2008 financial apocalypse, in turn-Gekko Shia LaBeouf (unwatchable, but never this unconvincing) attempts to marry the big man's estranged daughter, Casey Mulligan (amazing, boy's honest, good at crying), while becoming Gekko's protege in a bid to take revenge on his old mentor (the brilliant Jon Bernthal, who also stars in a modern money-making biopic).

There's plenty of scope to chew through here, but Stone knows it, playfully throwing in splintered, unfulfilled and other new territory. The director and his screenwriters, Alan Leicht and Stephen Schiff, throw out thousands of financial jargon (shorting, sub-prime, hedgefag), but the movie moves so smoothly you never need to ponder the details.

Despite refreshingly gone AWOL for long stretches of the film, Michael Douglas is a true guilty pleasure in Gekko. The oily megalomaniac is more alive when he's on screen, single-handedly raising our expectations with a new essential ambiguity while raising up the film's narrow margin. That great new mantra? "A fisherman always sees another fisherman from afar." **4**

But if the goody moni road of theughton makes the '80s look like Disneyland, Stone's fire ever-squashed a burning hot intent him to take a bite out of today's world. His Stone goes wild! His Bushing losing logic! If this packed more affection than anger, and onto signs, Will Stone falls in love with the shiny surfaces of capitalism that it's supposed to critique—encapsulated by Rodriguez. Even after the wins and disasters with anxious, involving shots that drill-like expertise.

After we spot a picture of Kirk Douglas on the wall while Gekko is getting a stat fused, up pops Charlize Theron below. Stone hands him a canape. Three of them, in fact. Clearly, he's having fun here. And so are we. No surprise: good is still good. **Jonathan Croucher**

**Anticipation.** Stone's first sequel and one of cinema's great villains. **4**

**Engagement.** A little toothless, but largely entertaining. **3**

**In Retrospect.** Stone's sharp fury for fun. But it sure beats another Fidel Castro interview. **3**

# The Switch

Directed by *Josh Gordon, Will Speck*  
Starring *Jennifer Aniston, Patrick Wilson, Jason Bateman*  
Released September 3



"I switched Karen's pregnancy?" No, it's not a line from super-symp *Smart People* — it's Jason Bateman in *The Switch*. Realizing that, in a pregnancy of mistaken species identity, he accidentally exchanged his own chromosomes to name-the-wiser host (had Jennifer Aniston, he'd now be the only one who knows that her seven-year-old looks actually like her).

*Knocked Up* meets *The Hangover*, then? Considering The Switch's premise, you'd be forgiven for thinking so. Strangely though, this film from the creators of *Marie's Tales* is similar more *Aniston* to *Kramer*. Somewhat pointedly, The Switch's story of a woman who doesn't need a man turns out to be a story that doesn't need a woman.

Which actually says more about Alan Ladd's script than it does about non-corn queen Jennifer Aniston, who here finds a lazier-than-lazy sparring

partner in Jason Bateman. It's just that their non-existence is an obviously grander towards a happily ever after than we have to Bateman's relationship with father-figure boss Jeff Garlin and wife-per son Thomas Robinson for something fresh to grab hold of.

The latter, The Switch remains mostly possible at best, and there's nothing here that we've not seen before, including Julie Anne Lewis persistently scratching about for a decent part (she was similarly underused earlier this year in *Wig Out!*). So Aniston's latent, if

still, The Switch remains mostly possible at best, and there's nothing here that we've not seen before, including Julie Anne Lewis persistently scratching about for a decent part (she was similarly underused earlier this year in *Wig Out!*). So Aniston's latent, if

rom-com, bromance not diversity. Indeed, despite some occasionally arresting visual designs, it often feels like an episode of the aforementioned soap, mostly glibly in *Arrested Development*.

**Anticipation:** Could be renamed *The Spermassive*. **Score:** 3/10

**2**

**Enjoyment:** Napkin-waved glee, but the blokes are a joy

**3**

**In Retrospect:** Sparking because it has no reality-exuding implausibility. Aniston's role is the weakest link

**2**



# A Town Called Panic

Directed by *Stephane Aubier, Vincent Patar*  
Starring *Stephane Aubier, Jeanna Balibar, Nicolas Bayon*  
Released October 8

In this day of age of CGI post-production, animation has become synonymous with the smoothed-out boudoir of Pixar and the blindingly beautiful coloring of Hayao Miyazaki's *A Town Called Home* a departure from both. Belgian debutants Stephane Aubier and Vincent Patar have never been afraid to colors outside the lines, and with ready-caps and ghet they have crafted a film that rock in the direction of Pixar and *Mystic Pizza* but belongs entirely to itself.

Aubier and Patar's first feature is arthouse animation: a micro-budget (by Disney's standards) of 100,000 euros (approximately \$130,000), the eponymous town, has a giddy, off-kilter, and cut-out cardboard-trim and plastic figurine horses in Horse, Cowboy and Indian.

When a birthday gift of an equo-friendly barbie goes horribly wrong for the two, it sparks a chaotic chain of events. Breathtakingly, we follow these isolated characters from their rural French setting through a wonderland of elemental physics, from the earth's core coursing molten lava to a snow-capped mountain stalked by a giant, robotic penguin, and on to an underwater labyrinth of molecular ice tundras. Suffice to say, it doesn't fit a second line out protagonists.

Like a lot of top-drawer animation, *A Town Called Home* is like *Titanic* for children. It is what it is and am much more; a bouncy and wacky unapologetic roller-coaster ride into a hyper-mind,

hyperactive world created from cheap children's toys. As a chronicle from location to location, element to element, it does no such the joyous spirit of a child's freeform mind.

While the adult social allegory and understandable tenderness so often provided by Pixar and Studio Ghibli is lacking, there is a tangible, a word sense of safety, that permeates through to the uniquely personal experience of early childhood. The sprawling narratives and inchoate personalities that are attached so liberally to amateur and amateurish figures like Spielberg has forged a career by targeting exactly these emotions, and by creating a film of subtle and peasant depth, Aubier and Patar have joined him. *Town* *Superior*

**Anticipation:** The first stop-motion animation film to be included in Cannes' official selection

**4**

**Enjoyment:** Wide-eyed, broad smile

**4**

**In Retrospect:** Like all toys, will only have a certain shelf life

**3**



# Made in Dagenham

Directed by *Nigel Cole*

Starring *Sally Hawkins, Rosamund Pike, Bob Hoskins*

Released October 1

**A**s a retelling of a landmark episode in the Women's Lib movement of the late 1960s, *Made in Dagenham* feels unmissably familiar. And yet somehow it's hard to put the remarkable true story behind the film into perspective. Like some dirty little secret, the fact that women were once treated with great inequality and patent discrimination in the workplace has been buried deep in the public subconscious.

If the 1968 Dagenham women's strike was a momentous leap forward for modern Britain, the real success of Nigel Cole's empowering drama is how fully it captures women's ability to kernels new life into catalytic sound events. Equally so.

Reckoning the vitriolic bitterness that has long been a hallmark of British kitchen-sink drama, *Dagenham* isn't about looking back in anger. While the likes of *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* and *Rose and the Tyre* are among the more obvious reference points, Cole hasn't orchestrated a history lesson but a victory parade.

Leading the march is Sally Hawkins, who proves her salt as the film's dogged heroine, Rita O'Grady. For Rita and her East London neighbours, making bread means clocking in at the nearby Ford motor

plant, where the men graze miles and wall doors and the women stretch out covers on the workshop floor. It's here Rita inadvertently steals herself to from the female workers without that creeps over an equal pay dispute. Seeing the women's plight in *Albert* (Bob Hoskins), a twinkle-eyed union rep with a heart of gold who helps take the fight from the factory gates to the stately steps of *Wharfie*.

Hawkins' Rita's metamorphosis from sputtering-crying mom of two to chop-chomping crusader at her stride, snaking the infections, coercive charm that's made her such hot property since her breakthrough in 2008's *Happy-Go-Easy*. And yet this is an emotionally demanding role, also.

As ripples from the strike reach the top, the Ford bosses are left with no choice but to task production, leaving hordes of male workers out of a job and otherwise idling, including Rita's husband Eddie (Daniel Mays). Dagenham then takes leave from a measured reconstruction of reining Britain, changing tack to focus on the fractious relationship of its lead couple. Cole's credulity may well point *Dagenham* in the 'feel-good' head of British cinema, but scarring

domestic subplots will at suddenly with audiences, even if solace in the women's triumph is always just around the corner.

Departing from the immediate concerns of the women's revolt to tackle the unspoken posterior unmetres of shell shock and extreme depression as a bold move, but Cole shuns his characters with delicate brotherhood, adding substance while never losing sight of the greater cause. *Dagenham* is at presenting a pace of people's erosion as *The Full Moon*, with bigger balls and heart to spare. *Adam Woodward*

**Anticipation.** 'The next Fall Stevens' tag is a heavy burden to bear. 3

**Enjoyment.** Feminist British comedy with an uplifting spirit. 4

**In Retrospect.** Will stuck in hearts and minds long after the smiles have faded. 4



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# Cherrie Currie

## Neon Angel

Interview by Matt Bockenski

**I** California and New York were the twin poles of the punk movement, where most that left LA in the early '80s, it was good to be glam in the West Coast — Bowie was the odd, and Beckenstein in make-up cringed the charts looking for the next big thing. For that was: the whole story. Southern California still enjoyed in the jet results of the Beach Boys, and earlier clubs enjoyed the early days of newness.

Cherie Currie was 15-year-old in 1979, just another California girl from a dysfunctional family living with her alcoholic father and into since. This was the year her life changed dramatically — not just when she became part of the Liverpudlian-style final singer of The Runaways, but before that, one night, when Cherie was raped by her sister's boyfriend.

"It completely ruined my mind from a southern California girl to just filled with hate that this man came into my life and took my virginity," she remembers. It was this rage that propelled Currie into the arms of Kim Fowley, ex-streetcar manager and promoter who (he pay day when he passed her with guitarist Joan Jett in an off girl rock band that attended the spiky-haired stages of LA's all-male punk scene.

The Runaways formed, bright and fast. In four years they toured the US twice and visited both Europe and Japan. They cut five original albums before the mod-rock concert caught up with them — the sex and drug parts of the rock 'n' roll roadshow. Currie's drug show was the catalyst for the band's painful break-up.

But The Runaways left their mark. "The Runaways were a bunch of teenage girls up there just trying to get a point across and trying to do it in a very short amount of time," she says. "We had everything against us — everything. All we wanted to do was survive; it wasn't about anything else. The Runaways, we were heading down a doom, and it was a metal door. So I feel like, you know what,

with everything that we going down with the drugs and all, I think that we did pretty darn well."

Currie documented everything that was going down in an autobiography, *New Angel*, first published in 1988. Almost two decades later, the book was being shaped around when it caught the attention of producer Art Lerner, whose credits include *Punk Rock Club*, *Lords of Dogtown* and his thrill-flick *Inside Pleasure*. Lerner, who had shot music videos for Bowie, was brought on board to direct, and the film began to take shape.

"I didn't believe it, I couldn't believe it!" was Currie's reaction to the news that her book — her adolescence — was going to become a movie. But she had the usual reservations as well. "There was so much that happened to The Runaways, so much in my story, and I didn't know how they would do that," she advises. "The Runaways story — the real story — would have to be a three-hour film, pen-hope!" In the end, they episodes — including the fact of her rape — were omitted entirely. "I would feel lead of cheated if we didn't have the book, let's just say that," is Currie's diplomatic take on the finished product.

What the film appreciates is the way (in)famous last captured the energy of that era — when the punk movement was like a shaggy, and messy little sexual revolution. But according to Currie, The Runaways never truly felt like they belonged. "It wasn't about belonging to any movement, because The Runaways, we started our own movement," she says. "We didn't even know what punk was. Then when we went to Europe and saw the punk movement, it scared us to death." How not? "There would have nightmares. She would wake up wondering that she was being shot on stage. They three friends at. They three ladies. They were separating us. They were tearing each other apart, the audience. They tried to save our cat out — we ended up running out one of the flats trying to get away. It was a violent movement back in 1976. It was really unerving for all of us. It was scary."

## Filmography *Cherrie Currie*

- Ricki Girl* (1960)
- The Rosebud Beach Hotel* (1960)
- Revolting* (1960)
- Parasite* (1960)
- Focus* (1960)

But The Runaways fought back — one scene in the film shows Bowley, played by Michael Shannon, smashing the girls' hair and pinning attack on roses, while Joan (played by Kristen Stewart) takes a look on a real guitarists equipment. Although the film paints a picture of a band enjoying success, however, Currie is quick to stress that it didn't feel like that at the time. "There was no success for The Runaways. In the movie, there appears to be but there really wasn't."

Indeed, the grueling schedule of tour, recording and promotion took its toll — all the band started taking drugs. From that point on, the story was only going to end one way. Couldn't the girls see it coming? "In the '80s it was very different than it is today. If you didn't do drugs there was something wrong with you — everybody did drugs. It was normal. So no, I didn't see it coming," she admits. "It was not only accepted but pushed on us by the people that worked with us. The booking agents, the promoters, they were the ones who would push us aside and say, 'Hey, do you want a pill?' They were the ones who were supplying us with the drugs, so how would us feel that what we were doing was wrong when the adults were the ones giving it to us?"

Though The Runaways story is handled by Currie, Currie can't quite bring herself to blame Kim Fowley. "Kim Fowley knew how to get people's attention," she says, although Currie makes no claim for discovering the black and white corner that did so much to fix her pillow song in the minds of rock fans (it's a credit that escapes her to a wrong degree). But it's her relationship with Joan that defines her talk. "I've always been a big admirer of Joan — she's just such a cool chick and she truly is the embodiment of rock 'n' roll."

Check out the full interview online in the week of release.



# The Runaways

Directed by: **Pfuma Sigismund**

Starring: **Kristen Stewart, Dakota Fanning, Michael Shannon**

Released: **September 10**

A fived Hitchcock movie and that you can do anything to an audience except situate on them. So he might just have approved of Pfuma Sigismund's rock biopic. For here, in the opening shot, a drop of tensioned blood has a California sideways, signifying the self-propelled start of adolescence in a film that attempts to bottle the spirit of teenage rebellion.

That is the birth of a new era, the mid-'70s, when West Coast glam goes way to the anarchic energy of punk. Right in the middle of it is Joan Jett (Kristen Stewart), club rat and guitar-vamping protege of bipolar bandleader Kim Fowley (Michael Shannon). Fowley has a vision of an all-girl rock group sent to seduce and destroy the LA underground. Just as his lead guitar, but the can't for the band's takeoff with the bewitchingly young blonde singer, Cherie Currie (Dakota Fanning).

The story of *The Runaways* follows a standard rock narrative - law-breaking band rises, seizes the fruits and then implodes. But Sigismund is less interested in the status of the group than the relationship between Jett and Currie, who share a volatile chemistry that edges into a kind of lesbophobic lesbianism.

The Runaways excels in the scenes that capture the desperation of the band's drive to fight, to succeed, to escape. This is an era in which Jett is told by a teacher that girls don't play electric guitars, but *The Runaways* ups and runs with through Currie's infectious cover and provocative onstage persona, blunt a softshell summary paragraph with danger.

Just as in the band itself, and something as precise, both Stewart and Fanning are strong to cast off the shackles of public perception - as Bigitte Virgin and child prodigy respectively. It's Fanning who impresses in the better role in a convincingly rock-ed-up will shift, steadily supping the exterior across the miles. Currie such a fascinating character. As Jett, Stewart is monorailly iron than rock goddess. It's a distinctly one-dimensional performance that makes exactly the same noise as Bigitte's Bells. It might be time to wonder whether Stewart has another kind of mile in her in store.

A bigger issue than the performances is Sigismund's treatment of the don's relationship. Much has been made of the sexual dynamic between Stewart and Fanning, but it seems even, or perhaps hypocritical - that a film examining the exploration of a female band should concern itself so intimately with shots of two young scissored in bedchairs and

Velours, sharing a publicly-gawking lesbian kiss and an awfully distract set scene. The question is whether *The Runaways* outshines Kim Fowley's cynicism or echoes it.

And yet the film remains both a weird portrait of an era and a testament to an unshamed rock legend. Cherie Currie took her fair share of teenage looks, but she dragged herself back up off the canvas. **Mark Bochenski**

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**Anticipation.** There have been plenty of tabloid headlines generated in advance of this movie.

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**Enjoyment.** Enraptured and aggressive but also questionable and ambivalent.

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**In Retrospect.** Not the breakout chart for which most here hoped for, but Fanning impresses once again.

# Over Your Cities Grass Will Grow

Directed by Sophie Fiennes  
Starring Anselm Kiefer,  
Klaus Dahlen  
Released October 12



## Certified Copy

Directed by Abbas Kiarostami  
Starring Juliette Binoche,  
William Shimell, Adrian Moore  
Released September 3

Is there ever such a thing as true? What or what defines authenticity? Can a copy be considered as valuable as the original to which it owes its being?

These questions form the crux of Abbas Kiarostami's film, each posed obliquely through the theoretical discourse of our two protagonists: an Englishman (William Shimell) and a French woman (Juliette Binoche). They are a couple bonded by a common past, but estranged by the cracks of biological evolution. There is a universal aspect

to this, a second nation, and the, an antique sofa, meet on a shoulder due in rural Tuscany. A short dessert takes them to the heart of the region and the birthplace of the Italian Renaissance, where they sink in high culture and black coffee and reissue the uncertainty of their relationship.

It is here Kiarostami seeks to broaden conventional attitudes toward artistic replication, looking beyond language and the time-honored

(Anselm Kiefer hasn't been born, Werner Herzog would have invented him. Perhaps it's unsurprising, then, that Werner-plate Sophie Fiennes — who previously made *The Forest's Guide to Cinema with mad genius Steven Zock* — has discovered him.

Herzen's capacious documentary underscores the work of the 63-year-old artist, who left Germany in the early '70s to begin creating an antinomianist artistic landscape in a wasteland in southern France.

Lakelike basaltic craters made for rocks underground, huge stone spires have become volcanic art factories. Rock-hewn houses are filled with stone books, oil paintings and human sculptures. Giant stone cubes are placed one on top of the other until they teeter precariously into the clouds like celestial palaces.

Distilling top notation for the dramatic scenes of *György László, Herzen's* caucasian probe through Kiefer's cameras (are they naturally occurring? Left here by others?) before passing to meet the editor at work.

We watch Kiefer mold mixed metal, raw concrete and shattered glass. His process is isolational and carries its much presidential power in the finished work. Although with Kiefer, no peace is ever final. The film is almost entirely nonlinear until a central segment when Kiefer sits down with a German interviewer and discusses... everything.

What troubles lies in his soul? "Honesty in

the project carried in front of me," he answers thoughtfully. He talks about his son: "It is only when one is born that one's consciousness arises, accidentally or even fortuitously, on oneself and the nature of one's own existence." He talks about the sea, about his suspicion that our cells carry "a memory of our origin" and how life strives to return "to bring a happy ending to the ocean." As Kiefer wrangles eloquently and fascinatingly with these big ideas, his children play in the background.

Curiosity and distraction and creation. Kiefer is constantly racking, smashing, burning, smearing, wrecking his art in an endless organic evolution of his world. Watching him at work makes you think that if there is a god, he must be a little mad. **Jonathan Croucher**



moments of European culture. Stripped down to its essence, *Certified Copy* is just another love story in a remote Tuscan village — cobblestone streets, umbrellas but for sporadic cheetah box prints, the tranquility of the place happily spoilt by the scorching bust of wedding bells and bordello. But what better place to witness the mechanisms of postmodernism than the adopted home of Botticelli, Machiavelli and da Vinci?

For all its poesy and cinematic beauty, however, *Certified Copy* offers little gratification. As the genesis of the couple's tenderness becomes more of a muddlement and obscurus, it becomes difficult to invest in them on any meaningful emotional level.

Boatrace may have been Best Actress recipient in Cannes earlier in the year, but in truth her performance, while certainly accomplished, is nothing special. Shimell (an open baritone by trade) makes the transition to the big screen comfortably,

but his more luminous overcompensates for his character's lack of festivity.

There might be enough here to hint the cinematic crowd, but Kiarostami brazenly leaves the line slack for too long. **Adam Woodward**

**Anticipation.** Kiarostami's firm film oeuvre of Iran was a serious contender for the Palme d'Or

**Enjoyment.** Beautiful, elegant, sharp — just not as much as it thinks it is

**In Retrospect.** A masterpiece await.

**1**

**4**

**4**

**4**

**3**

**3**

# Going the Distance

Directed by **Nanette Burstein**  
Starring **Drew Barrymore, Justin Long, Christina Applegate**  
Released **September 10**



# Frozen

Directed by **Adam Green**  
Starring **Emma Bell, Shawn Ashmore, Kevin Zegers**  
Released **September 24**

Through a series of calamities, three people are left stranded on a desolate ski resort that has closed for the week. Suspended high above the ground, their increasingly frantic appeals for help are met with the deafening silence of an angry and indifferent landscape. Peace and disorder set in together, while beneath their feet a pack of wolves seems an easy kill.

This is the elegant premise of Adam Green's *Frozen*, one that will descend over the course of 90 minutes into an excruciating testament to human desperation. The question is simple: what would you do to survive? The answers, as offered by Joe (Shawn Ashmore), his best friend Dan (Kevin Zegers), and Dan's girlfriend Parker (Gemma Bell), really aren't pretty.

Once they are done with denial and disbelief, the two turn their attention to the reality of their situation. Should they jump or not? Will they be rescued first or die from exposure? As they grapple

with these now for the romantic-comedy? After months of the potatos (Killer), patoisong (Celi and the Guy 2) and playful (Lovers at Last), it seems only the French can balance escapism with passion, as displayed in Pascal Chauvel's sublimely cheeky *Horrorbels*. But Hollywood hasn't given up. *Going the Distance* boasts a new task, overthrowing the Cinderella complex of its predecessors by introducing a welcome shot of grit.

Drew Barrymore plays Eliza, an ambitious intern at a New York newspaper. So far, so Kate Hudson. But Eliza is about to flee the city in search of full-time work out west. Just weeks before the move to California, however, she falls for record player Garrett (Justin Long). Both know that with 3000 miles between them – and no car – this relationship won't be easy, but breaking up seems premature. As Eliza works the West Coast writing tables, and Garrett struggles with love across the time zones, the rhythms of a rural economy seem to strengthen their dreams.

*Going the Distance* sets romance as make-believe and instead either has Mr. Big shelling out for a walkabout. Eliza and Garrett's story plays out in gung-ho and Avery (papery) look, every kiss, every breath of grunge tour finds authentic. Maybe it's because Long and Barrymore actually clicked, maybe because the actress' own poignant

history informs her every performance. Mindy, though, isn't in the dialogue, a script that needs no history, mystery and frank discussions of life's curiosities that only add-warmth-they-something-else

Clouds drift in, *Horrorbels* mass an predictably doper a proto classic for the way in Bushido weirds it out, getting too thoughtful, while the film's refreshing exuberance occasionally erosion the line plain. *Horrorbels* grows out of a soundly judged finale, played out, like much of the film, to the visceral music of The Boss Rebelel, shows that hard-hitting resonance is all the more rewarding. The path to true love is lined with grit. **James King**

**Anticipation:** Another rom-com? **Blame:** *Carrie Bradshaw*

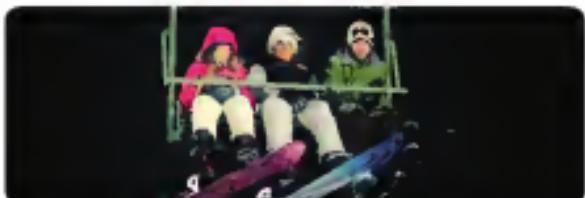
**2**

**Engagement:** Gives the love story a much-needed punch in the gut.

**4**

**In Retrospect:** Doesn't go the whole distance. But it's a start.

**3**



with those questions, the film assumes an air of almost unbearable tension. Where so many horror films flinch away any empathy for their protagonists by having them make stupid decisions, *Frozen* presents a sensible conundrum whose only solution appears to lie in an act of madness.

Crucially, Green manages to give his characters just enough of an interior life to make us care about their fates, even though they are hardly likable and cut towards the archetypal.

For the film of heart, some of the set-pieces will be genuinely conceivable. They are supplied by a sound design that masterfully accommodates every element of physical suffering, and a relatively light touch when it comes to the few scenes that rely on gory special effects. Indeed, *Frozen* does sell tension as a form of macabre humour. But make no mistake: this is an authentic horror in which the fragile tissue of the human body is set against the unpredictable

horror of nature. **Mark Burthoole**

**Anticipation:** From *Zero to The Blue Wheel*, horror films love to ruin our enjoyment of the great outdoors. Now they've got their sights set on the innocent skiing holiday. **Mark Burthoole**

**3**

**Engagement:** Fiendish, sweaty and tense as hell. Due to watch through the fingers.

**3**

**In Retrospect:** Well make you seriously consider hibernating rather than hitting the slopes this year.

**4**



## The Last Exorcism

Directed by *Daniel Stamm*

Starring *Patrick Fabian, Ashley Bell, Liane Haidous*

Released *September 3*

**D**aniel Stamm's *The Last Exorcism* is more reminiscent of the found-footage style of *Blair Witch* than the pure "found footage" approach of *Paranormal Activity*, but ultimately comes across as a bizarre coupling of *The Exorcist* and *Blair Witch*. Patrick Fabian stars as shady Southern exorcist Cotton Marcus, who agrees to let a sinner over round his deal exorcism to expose how phony the art of demonic exorcism really is. Unfortunately, this time he finds himself doing it for real. *The Last Exorcism* is a fun and utilized movie that utilizes a superb central performance by Fabian to create a dully eerie but fun ride throughout the proceedings. The final product works best as a pitch-black comedy — right down to the slightly *deformities* — much more than it does as a full-blooded frightening in the tradition of the *spooktaculars* of religious horror. *The Exorcist*: **Bruce Askill** **3 3 3**



## Collapse

Directed by *Craig Sjodin*

Starring *Michael Rappert*

Released *October 1*

**C**ollapse is little more than a movie, a clear still a packet of smokes, and yet it is an unflinching species — a documentary unaccompanied documentary that has come unspun strangled. The man is unshaven actor Michael Rappert who babbles, volubly, at the ineradicable distortion of industrialized civilization as we know it, and here he has been given free rein to tell us why Rappert has a precision and commanding rhetorical style, and his world now is unerringly pessimistic. Oil has peaked and is running out, forests are cutters, and capitalism has sold us the ghost of infinite growth. Under the low of economic gravity, we're heading towards a crash. Director Craig Sjodin lets Rappert both as editor and parent, and he comes across as an angry yet compassionate man, secure in his convictions but low on his emotions. He may look stern, but now at last he has an audience. *Toon Seymour* **2 4 3**



## The Arbor

Directed by *Glen Bernard*

Starring *Christine Baranski, Neil Dudgeon, Natalie Coxon*

Released *October 22*

**C**lu Bonham's direction of the life and legacy of playwright Andrea Dunbar is a fascinating look at working-class Britain and the effects of growing up in a gritty Bradford estate. But more than that, it's a stirring meditation on the subjectivity of memory. Dunbar's children — now in their twenties — recall their past in testimony as arrows rip open their lives, with her two daughters taking center stage with essentially sympathetic yet drastically different accounts of their upbringing. The fact that they never appear on screen allows them to talk candidly, while Bonham is given the artistic freedom for some stunning visual interpretations. Fact and fiction merge once more in a alongside archive footage of Dunbar's play *The Arbor* on the event that inspired it, alongside archive footage of the tribe. This is a deeply resonant piece of filmmaking that leaves you sure of one thing — there's always more than one truth. *Laura Buckell* **3 4 5**



## Involuntary

Directed by *Ruben Ostlund*

Starring *Vilhelm Blomqvist, Linnéa Cato-Lönn, Leif Edland*

Released *October 8*

**T**he back of a couple of hands in the winter of two rats, the last of people entering a party — just some of the establishing shots in Sjodin's writer/director Ruben Ostlund's morbidly pica about peer pressure, played out among different age groups at a kids' get-together, a grandmother's birthday party and among teachers at school respectively. The different scenarios are threaded through one another, each one becoming more exasperating as it develops. The horrific release of laughter is all too mere, though the film's humor is reminiscent of the bleak absurdity of *Key and Peele's* *blue, the Living*, whose fractured scenarios Ostlund's own film evokes. Some of the issues of another *Scenes, Eat the Right One*. In director Roman Polanski's *creep* is too, but these morose cautionary tales of embarrassment and nervous art, for the most part, predictable and unoriginal, despite the microscope applied to them. *Jonathan Miller* **4 3 2**



## Restrepo

Directed by *Tim Hetherington, Sebastian Junger*  
Released: October 4

**R**estrepo was a 15-man outpost in the Korengal Valley, a Taliban haven deep in Afghanistan. Built in the middle of the night under 360-degree fire from the above, poison enemy, it was the tip of the spear in the War on Terror. This is a sparse and aggressive documentary. There's no narration, no interviews with anyone but the soldiers, no Afghan perspective – just 150 hours of footage cut down to a series of unfolding moments, the horizons, the fire and frostbites, the coming for revenge. While the hand opinion is never voiced, it is nevertheless apparent: why are these soldiers here? This is modern soldier-ism, the bait to Wilfred Owen and Eric Motte. But while *Restrepo* is held above the practitioners of war, it is not 'about' the war. Occasionally, fleetingly, we see the people of the Korengal – mothers holding children, old men bending grain. Elsewhere the purpose: This is the war, and it is only glorified. **Tess Steyn** **4.5**



## The Kid

Directed by *Nick Moran*  
Starring *Katzenbach McElroy, Rupert Friend, Rose Graefield*  
Released: September 17

**A** cross-dressed-dancer Nick Moran follows his workday Joe Mack (ropic) (barefoot with bloodied idiosyncrasies of crime senior Karen Lewis) (horrifically autobiographical). Looked in a bar, group rooms and routinely bounced off the walls by his single-mother, Karen starts life as a nervous, withdrawn lad who endures himself from FBI everyday to hide the angry purple soles working his body. Despite finding matches of suspense in lesser case, he suffers further at the hands of a series of domineering and petty thugs until finally finding the courage to turn his life around. The source book was championed by *The Morning's* Ruth Blyden, and Moran seems to be aiming for the same audience. Lewis' story is unquestionably horrific but by forcing it into the mould of a triumph-over-adversity heart-wumper, all of the raw, nasty edges have been smoothed off to leave a tiddly-smart вид of gloss. **James Gauley** **2.2**



## Budrus

Directed by *Julia Bacha*  
Starring *Ayed Asfour*  
Released: September 27

**J**ulia Bachar's *Budrus* documents one village's non-violent resistance to the Israeli separation barrier in the West Bank of Palestine. 'The Fence', as they call it, will cut through the town's cemetery, divide its olive groves and take land from its citizens – all in the name of protecting the Jewish people. Bachar deftly captures Ayed Asfour and his teenage daughter as they voice their constituency with the help of foreign supporters (including sympathetic Israeli) in a struggle for their land. By incorporating interviews with an Israeli Border Police captain and a spokesman from the military police, *Budrus* presents a relatively balanced view of the dispute, particularly for those unfamiliar with the regional politics. And yet from the very beginning, it's difficult to fathom how one country can snare a region and declare parts of it their own without expecting some kind of resistance. The people of Budrus can only be admired. **Liz Hayes** **3.3**



## No Impact Man

Directed by *Lauren Greenberg, Justin Schreier*  
Starring *Colin Beavan, McCallie Condit*  
Released: September 3

**C**olin Beavan, the 'No Impact Man', is neither puritanical environmentalist. Or maybe he's just a misfit. He still is a caffeine-addicted journalist and their daughter's secret soldier. Colin doesn't like consumerism and he's decided to make 'No Impact' (no electricity, no waste, only local, seasonal food) for a solid year. It doesn't sound like fun and it isn't fun to switch. He chooses to make papers, and when his wife goes after a new bag, he looks at her in disbelief on the board of BP and then steals it in her spare time. Colin is also into self-promotion, or rising awareness, depending on your opinion of grace. 'I'm just following the dictate of my conscience,' he says in justification. For play, but the great unashed with the public conscience tend to enjoy things like Starbucks, hot showers and good movies. Until he acknowledges that contradiction, the No Impact Man will have exactly that. **Tess Steyn** **2.1**

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of course



THE

# Back Section 31



GABRIELE MUCCINO



ONE EAST KISS  
Seven Pounds

# THE ITALIAN DIRECTOR REVEALS WHY HIS COUNTRY'S CINEMA IS 'PERFECT.'

BY MATT RICHARDSON  
PHOTOGRAPH BY SIMONE

He wryly扫 around 12-year-old *Star Trek* posters down below the building where I used to live with my parents. I remember watching *2001: A Space Odyssey*, and this existential, cryptic journey keenly captured me and brought me into this fascinating world of cinema.

Francesco Musciano has a way with words. And images, too. But today, at the centre of a whirlwind of cameras and people in a West London hotel room, the director is talking, talking, talking in richly idiomatic English – visualising only in his head the pictures and memories that have brought him to this place.

English-language audiences know Musciano best for his Hollywood collaborations with Bill Nighy, *The Pursuit of Happyness* and *Sixty Seconds*. But although he describes the process of working in America as

a "bittersweet" one, he's still "a bit homesick about it", as he tries, unconvincingly, to become a disciple of Italy.

"I can say without a doubt that Italian cinema to me, remains the greatest pleasure of what cinema should be," says the 57-year-old. "Something in the golden age of Italian cinema, the cinema that ended in the '70s and started in the late '40s, that is unique and not meant to display or to explain. You can clearly feel that Italian cinema was born literally from the ashes of fascism, from bombing, from the war. It felt like the Italian nation had to be really down and out in order to find the inspiration to reveal something about themselves. This struggling element I think is what makes the characters so poignant, so poetic, somehow iconic and so real. And also unique. I can't recall other international cinematographies that have been able to portray the weak spots of humanity like the Italian cinema."



After falling in love with cinema as a boy, Muccino quickly moved from Kubrick to the Italian masters of that golden age – Vittorio De Sica, Enrico Scalas, Bernardo Bertolucci. As a director I feel incredibly linked to the great masters of Italian cinema, he says. "Every time I have found myself with a ticket of invitation to re-watch certain movies, and through the experience of revisiting and rereading those movies, I find extra inspiration and an extra literary." The only exception is with the greatest master of them all, Fellini: "Fellini is too big," says Muccino, wide-eyed. "Fellini is such a giant that you can't really learn his way, it's unique."

Unsurprisingly, Italian cinema prides itself on handing down the lessons of its craftsmanship from one generation to the next. The result is a lineage system, perhaps simply a collective belief in the principles of passion, imagination, art, aesthetics, realities and heritage.

Muccino developed his craft the traditional way, directing short films that gave him the freedom "to make mistakes, and from any mistake you make you learn something. That has been my belief for executing this job, where I really collected a lot of experiences as a director."

That led to a first feature, *Il Gatto e la Farfalla* (The Cat and the Butterfly) in 1988, but it was *Il Bacio di una Signora* (The Last Kiss) with Stefano Accorsi and Vanessa Incontrada Mezzogiorno that really saw Muccino emerge with a distinctive directorial voice. It was the culmination of a long and difficult journey: "It's very hard for somebody who wants to be a director," he admits. "You have to knock on certain doors and find somebody to believe you. There's very hard when there are many other competitors. You really had to find my own way, which





probably has been an asset, an ally, a strength, because I had to find my voice through my own work."

Conscious of the obstacle — "You need in his own career, Muccino is now working alongside Piero Nastri Azurro to create an Academy" — he will offer him the chance to mentor a new generation of young filmmakers and technicians. Under the banner of the *Pieroi Nastri Azurro Accademia del Film* (with Giuliano Muccino, the director, he shot a short film, *Sai-Te* (pictured opposite), in 2006 where he was shadowed on set by a hand-picked selection of young crew members from a fellow director — a producer, composer, DP, stylist and make-up artist.

"My collaboration with the Accademy, Pieroi Nastri Azurro is creating the opportunities that I wished I'd had when I was dreaming of being a filmmaker," he reveals. "It reminds me how frustrated I was when I couldn't get such chances. And I see myself in those great guys that we selected, when I was really dreaming and struggling."

But he's not about to go away on these youngsters, either. "You need to be frightened by your material, you need to be challenged, you need to be ready," says Muccino. "You have to know that if you don't get really challenged, you may be lazy and then you may end up doing something lacking energy."

As Muccino and Pieroi Nastri Azurro come together to celebrate their shared values of passion, craftsmanship and attention to detail, it's hard to see that being a problem.



**"YOU NEED TO BE FRIGHTENED BY YOUR MATERIAL, YOU NEED TO BE CHALLENGED, YOU NEED TO BE READY."**

# BONG



THE KOREAN  
DIRECTOR OF  
KILLER-THRILLER  
MOTHER TALKS  
TO LIES.

# JOON&HO

## INTERVIEW BY



## JONATHAN CROCKER

### LWJee

After the success of *The Host*, did you get many offers from Hollywood?

### BONG

I received a lot of scripts from the US, but these were projects that I had in mind before *The Host*. I don't think I will work in Hollywood ever again. But it can have final cut and I do over-see some projects. I hope to make a movie in Hollywood.

### LWJee

So how you turned down big studios?

### BONG

When I got [the script] my agent gave me two movies starring Paul Blart. When I saw the movie, I thought, 'C'mon! I read the script and the result was not really my kind of movie.'

### LWJee

Mother is definitely your kind of movie. For you what's next?

### BONG

The story between the mother and the son of *Mother*, it's a great love. But I wanted to express this in a different way. You see, sometimes you have to live it like it was like a dark situation. So I wanted to express that love and sadness together with this love. We don't know if it's good or evil – if it's love or just absolute attachment. I didn't know either when I was writing.

### LWJee

Do you see it as a metaphor given to *Mother* of *Mother* of *all*?

### BONG

When I was writing the script and shooting it I realized that it was very similar to *Mother of Mother* – the story, the masterpiece, the background and especially the representation of the police. It was funny for me to imagine that they're still silly and dumb. But compared to *Mother of Mother*, the policemen here have more advanced technology and the use of violence is also quite different. Before, they were hitting people on the head. Now they're hitting the apples.

### LWJee

How did you come to cast Kim Myung as the mother?

### BONG

Surrounding in the West, but I know who's a good natural actress. While like a natural actress and I thought it was great for me to use her for this. On TV, she was always playing the mother mother, like strongly. I saw in her a dark and hysterical side – almost like a madman – so I wanted to put her in an extreme situation and make her explode. There was a type of her that I wanted to express. Her only-did two movies which was better for you because she was...

### LWJee

Are there any movie mothers that you feel inspired from?

### BONG

MOVEMENT, *Psycho* and *Psycho* project show that character and express a very strong, very touching mother characters.

### LWJee

Is the character based on your own mother?

### BONG

There are some real elements in the character that are like her. She is very soft-headed and sensitive and she has a lots lot of a practical mind in her. And despite the fact that the 40-year-old, she always worries about me. She went to Central for the world premiere, but I was a little bit nervous about my mother seeing the film.

### LWJee

Could she tell someone?

### BONG

Yes. I think that if she was put to the show of the main character, I think my mother would also do the same thing. Whatever the country, I ask this question: Would you also do that for your mom? It's a very provocative question.

### LWJee

The whole movie has the toughest scenes?

### BONG

Friends said they didn't know Korean mothers could be rough. But they told me Polish mothers are worst. But Polish people say: 'No, Polish mothers are toughest.' Then in Italy, they say Italian are worse.

# DVD

WEEKENDS / 1000+ RELEASES / 100+ REVIEWS / 100+ DVD REVIEWS

AVAILABLE AUGUST 8

## FLASH GORDON

DIRECTED BY MIKE HODGES (1980)

Flash, ah, ah, survivor of the universe in back, will hold over! Now you can see and hear the Sydow's Kling the Martians. Or the Blizzed in the tell-tale signs and sound-bites of Timothy Leary's planet Mongo, all in glorious HD. But for all the film's high-energy ridiculousness remember director Mike Hodges made *Get Carter* and designer Dennis Gabor learned her trade working for *Films for the Blind*.

## RIO BREAKS

DIRECTED BY JUSTIN MASTERS (2004)

True to its own other roots, *Rio Breaks* is an adolescent re-interpretation of the Peaky Bluff Club - a small, acrobatic gang that often has Rio's short girls a chance at a better life. Short with process skill, this is a unique rendering of a meeting, sun-drenched city and its freewheeling, beautiful children. **B+**

## DAUGHTERS OF DARKNESS

DIRECTED BY RABBY FENEL (1971)

Daughters of Darkness screens 'cause movie. Stylish, eerie, yet cold and masterful are very much the kind of vampire movie you can imagine coming out of 1970s Britain. This 100+ minute driller to the cut is the best time the film has been shown in its unedited form. An bolts of artifice, it is an atmospheric, character-heavy totally bizarre experience. **B**

## SCANDAL

DIRECTED BY MICHAEL GOTTMAN-JONES (1980)

The Perfume Affair considered the cornerstone of decades of political satire and the catalyst for the downfall of Harold Macmillan's government, as revisited in this vision of audacity and sexual hypocrisy. Directed by Michael Gottman-Jones and unwatched by John Hurt, Joanne Whalley and Ian McEwan, this is a wacky re-expansion full of the type of graphic set pieces that family movies **A**

## COOL AS ICE

DIRECTED BY DAVID HELGREN (1980)

Venice Ice can't budge. It's the new Christ on a bike, ya'll. Half-blond, he's had a bad bummer. He never no mess up poor daughter and new poor wife. Using just his sweet leather jacket, one appeal and rawest skills, he's gonna take a hostage situation and get the girl. **B**

## LOLA

DIRECTED BY JACQUES Demy (1963)

Jacques Demy's debut drama is a loving tribute to his idol Max Ophüls, who has to be one of the most underhanded masters in the history of cinema. Directed by Dempsey's musical without music, the film follows the pregnant Lola as she evades the ructions of her trap house while struggling through life in a twisted cabaret stage. **B**

## CAUGHT IN THE CROSSFIRE

DIRECTED BY IRVING L. MILLER (1950)

What do you mean, just another cop-and-ponytail? Miller's *Detour*? That's the easy one. *Chris Klein Is It, You Know?* The guy from *Street Fighter*, *The Legend of Chun-Li* (oh, and some gay called Curtis Jackson, whenever he is). Think *Die Hard* but grayer. **B**

AVAILABLE SEPTEMBER 15

## THE THIRD MAN

DIRECTED BY CAROL REED (1949)

Another re-mixing of *Carol Reed's* classic British film noir, with Joseph Cotten chasing Orson Welles through a dark, dreary metropolis reeling from the ravages of World War II. Akira Kurosawa gives excellent support as a reviving moll who refuses to accept that Welles' Harry Lime is anything but mean. **B**

# THE PIANIST

DIRECTED BY ROMAN POLANSKI (2002)

A cold andconvincing study of life in the Warsaw ghetto, *The Pianist* uses Adrien Brody bearing the burden of the survival - an antisemite who throughout and the clarity of others is destined to live while all around him perishes. Roman Polanski's Holocaust epic resists moralizing, and emerges stronger for it. **B**

# THE GRADUATE

DIRECTED BY MIKE NICHOLS (1967)

On paper, a film following a teenager with all striking out into the world of adult night scenes is unlikely candidate to become iconic, generation-defining cinema. In reality, *The Graduate* is as timeless as the day it was released - it's unlikely Charles Hoffman a gawking police officer ever grew old. **B**

# MULHOLLAND DRIVE

DIRECTED BY CARY FISCHER (2001)

It's almost a decade since David Lynch took audiences on a nightmarish journey through the dark underbelly of the Hollywood machine, yet *Mulholland Drive* still delivers a potent kick of surrealism, macabre and surreal cinematic wonder. It may be like both distorted and distorted repeat hearings, but in **B** **BB**

# DELICATESSEN

DIRECTED BY JEAN-PIERRE JEUNET (1991)

France's sci-fi dystopia with offbeat fable and dark comedy, *Delicatessen* prints up into the weird lives of the扭曲and tormented, each part of a bizarre, part-surreal landscape where lettuce are used as currency. It's an eccentric debut from a talented director and pace-setter visual innovator. **B**

# LE CERCLE ROUGE

DIRECTED BY JEAN-PIERRE JEUNET (1970)

Brimming with existential anger and hard-hailed pacifism, Jean-Pierre Melville's best job finds its way onto Blu-ray for the first time. From the outset, Melville's message is clear: often don't pay. But Alain Delon's powerhouse turn as a well-hailed crook trying to step one step ahead of his consequences makes *Le Cercle Rouge* a neo-noir classic well worth revisiting. **B**

# BREATHLESS: 50TH ANNIVERSARY

DIRECTED BY JEAN-LUC GODARD (1960)

Perhaps the most influential post-war film of the generation, Godard's *Breathless* hasn't lost its cache of its Parisian swagger or Alain Delon's sexiness, and Godard may have left his audience in the 60s, but Jean-Paul Belmondo and Jean Seberg remain the movie's prime couple for good reason. Young love, party blues and Hoffmann glamour have never felt so fresh. **B**

AVAILABLE SEPTEMBER 24

# SHOOTING ROBERT KING

DIRECTED BY RICHARD PERRY (1990)

While most people would do anything to avoid a war zone, photographer Robert King has spent the last 17 years seeking them out. Richard Perry's extraordinary documentary follows him through Bosnia, Chechnya and Iraq as he risks life and limb to bring the invisible images of conflict to broadest reaches around the world. **B**

# DEAD LONGENOUGH

DIRECTED BY TOM COLLINS (2005)

Irish director Tom Collins first feature brings on a new brand of intriguingly banalistic humor in *QDF*. The polar personality Jesus' brothers confront poor relatives on a long trip to Georgia. A string cast admirably tackles a disjointed script featuring inexplicable chapter breaks, perverse, backbiting and predictable plot "twists". **B**

# DEMONS

DIRECTED BY LAMBERT BARK (1981)

A gleefully off-color horror from the São Paulo Psycho stable in which partners in an apparently normal couple find themselves trapped as inmates in the São Paulo psychiatric hospital to which they came. With Alice Gómez and Iggy Pop featuring, Bark's a wacky comedy but can sometimes feel like an extended backslapping session for daytrippers from the rock n' roll scene. **B**

AVAILABLE OCTOBER 4

# DEFAMATION

DIRECTED BY YARIV SIMON (1999)

This award-winning documentary from Israeli filmmaker Yariv Simon examines the peripheries of so-called anti-Semitic views that hold sway among some US and Israeli publishers who use semi-Semitic or an off-purpose label for anyone who criticizes Israel. After all, power, the Anti-Defamation League, with beautiful irony described the film as a cheapening of the Holocaust and insulting of anti-Semitism. **B**

AVAILABLE OCTOBER 18

# LAST TRAIN HOME

DIRECTED BY LINH ĐÀM (2002)

Every year, 130 million Chinese migrant workers travel across the vast country to return to their place of birth for New Year. At the largest human exodus on earth, an incredibly dramatic pilgrimage that, until Linh Đàm's *Last Train Home*, had never been caught on camera. There are few better modern examples of this capturing a country caught between its rural past and urban future and the human cost of a genuine industrial revolution. **B**

AVAILABLE OCTOBER 25

# POSSESSION

DIRECTED BY ANDREW LELLAWE (1981)

Making its way to the US on DVD for the first time after making an extended resurgence on the "Video Nostalgia" block, *Possession* is Andrew Lelaw's intense psychological horror with a dogmatic political undercurrent. A jaw-droppingly commercial precursor to Lars von Trier's *Antichrist*, this is about as anti-maternalism as they come. **B**

# SUCK

DIRECTED BY ROB STEPHENS (2000)

Described as a rock 'n' roll comedy-comedy, *Suck* follows multi-trousered band The Minnows as they travel around North America after their break-out tour with a company with Alice Cooper and Iggy Pop featuring. Bark's a wacky comedy but can sometimes feel like an extended backslapping session for daytrippers from the rock n' roll scene. **B**

# Hollywood Vice Squad

EXCERPT  
FEEL  
Parents...



DIRECTED BY  
PAULINE SPYMAN

STARRING  
DEN THOMAS, ANDREW LLOYD WEBBER

BOX MARKINGS  
Rating: R/18+ - Sex scenes

TAGLINE  
The Hollywood Vice Squad is the world's  
most notorious police force in the world.

TRAILERS  
RECRUITS: THE BOMBAY BOMBERS  
THE CLEVELAND STEAMERS

CHERRYHICK  
CAUTION: EXPLOSIVE

1986

The main plot is about a mother searching for her missing daughter through the drug-dealing and sales of crack. She loves the hope that she can control her life to save her child life of drug-dealing. She comes up by a series of jarringly realistic scenes in which traumatic acts of violence and sex need to be seen.

Robin Wright plays the sweet daughter with confusion from puppy-like form to a sullen-adolescent and broken with no little will, and Tracy Reiner makes for a scarily ugly department store clerk. There's a ridiculous amount of Carter Police in that five-minute window that's a constant for her appearance as more and more cops in children's police and the increasing, perverted, intentions. There's even turning up on other cities over there, but there are more steps in an ocean of abuse and sex scenes under cover of sleep.

The film's many subplots rely entirely on the assumption that any act of interaction between a bunch of bared-up, fat boys on a night Japanese business, a gaggle of primp draggers and a mean-minded healer with a face like 40 miles of bad road will automatically trigger anxiety episodes. The only full-blown action in this fractured thesis is to send Truvette audience in a jolting red and alternating heat-shock to indicate that adults enable or protect prostitutes. At which point the other girls are through him, and she should? Would you believe in that? I would. I would myself after viewing a series of C.R.A.P. and taking a look around my own city, which did.

Of course, violence, torture and harsh language scenes are nothing new to this country, but given the shot in the arm that the movie industry had received from the mid-90s box office, the production of this deeply unpleasant collection of mostly vignettes make the film appear like the dark chocolate of human awakening. It would have us believe this, and peers aside to a rising less tame to the jolting extremes of the full-length series.

**WORDS BY  
ADAM LEE DAVIES**

"The Hollywood Vice Squad is a masterpiece. It's a cult classic, one of the most notorious and controversial films in the country. The movie is so brilliant, so raw, and so off-the-wall, it's a work of art. It's a stark, violent, and honest work of art. It's a documentary or an artful biography. It's a movie that's hard to believe for a moment, but it does at least try to prepare us for our forthcoming journey into a Bygones past where nothing more than the growing list of our increasingly bungled misdeeds still grinds on.

Through the many gates of a now-annual Hollywood we explore a tradition that's become a depressed Paraiso of the Dordogne populated by an enormous fraternity of bungling Bombers, glorified Goofies and decent Dumbies. For this is a three-ring circus of sick and oily saschamala, where the only thing that can make

the otherwise decent citizens of Los Angeles the desire to kick your teeth with the cold bone of poverty, but cause in the touch of anything warm or safe or clean.

Welcome to a world where the whomever heads up the benders where and Jewy Theodora squad of vice cops patrol the Roppongi hills with all the street smarts of a pack of dogs. If a heart that largely consists of largely false at the body Threepointers, Madam Jane, and surrounding stations of East Los Angeles, and one which is duly coated out with the shingles and professionalism of a city associated with the famously unpredictable world of lawlessness, the LAPD. What you see has decided, however, is whether the cynical audience have decided in the judgment of hard-hitting words of the no-holds-barred paragraphs of the narrative.

THE  
ARCHIVE N° 11  
+  
LA STRADA  
+  
(1934)

YANN ET JASSE YANN

**C**onsidered one of the milestones of 20th-century European cinema (though with Donald Thompson giving a dissenting voice, labelling it 'desperately perverse'), and ranking alongside the more celebrated *La Dolce Vita* (1960) and (rarely) revised *Nights of Cabiria* (1967), *La Strada* stands as one of the pillars of Federico Fellini's career. A sad and poignant remembrance of penniless lost and of the roads that each of us must choose, it's a moment of melancholy work suffused with ambiguity and regret.

Sold by her impoverished mother to Zampogni (Anthony Quinn), a Jewish bootlegger (read: swindler-like) Balietto (Giovanni Moles) lives a life of drudgery as his assistant. After taking to the road with a travelling circus, a budding relationship with El Muñoz (Richard Harewood) – a gentle-voiced, righteously walking circus – offers a potential refuge from her master's clutches. Trapped by her own servile nature, Balietto leaves, and Zampogni's volatile temper erupts with tragic consequences.

Characteristically amalgamating Fellini's own biography with metaphor and symbolism,

*La Strada* oscillates at recognising charm with a harsher edge evident in the form of domestic violence and the unreturned presentation of Gelsy's economically deprived and decaying town. Through Balietto's heartbreak, Moles – Fellini's wife and muse – is acknowledging in the central role, her performance, the executive Miss Rita's voice and Gelsy Marzulli's revolting photograph combined to make this film a very attractive proposition to the American Academy voters, who bestowed an *La Strada* the honour of becoming the winner of the first official Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film.

Reselling *Americana* road movies set in the Depression era for its future in California's poverty as a catalyst for mobility, the film then oscillates from the theme of poverty, becoming more concerned with the central character's emotional and spiritual alienation and pursuit of identity.

In this regard, *Driving Visions* author David Bordwell argues that, in comparison with Ingmar Bergman's *Wittgenstein* (1953), the difference of Fellini's film on the road mode genre is extreme. Bergman and Fellini helped forge the modernist language and iconography that paved the way for

the French New Wave, while, in turn, influencing the road movie *Midnight Express* (1978), its series.

Through artfully *La Strada*'s little evocative film the American fable of the late '60s and early '70s, its reliance on a character whose interior journey is predicated upon introspection and reflection, and whose passage through the alienating landscape becomes an allegory for a search for meaning and a sense of purpose in life, undeniably foisted large over filmakers such as Dennis Hopper, Monte Hellman and Michael Cimino.

Effectively using travelling shots linking harsh rural landscapes to tracks which Gelsy's火车, Fellini also incorporates a series of intense montage sequences and moments among camera shots to convey the barren and empty landscape through which the entertainers trek. These filmic and lyrical arrangements sequences would become a potential feature of the movie's work. Here they brilliantly convey in the spectator their lived, very tired, white road. Finally, the film is notable for being one of the earliest endeavours to feature a female protagonist, inexplicably less followed in tracks.

LA STRADA

QUINN MASINA

1954

# Vittorio



# De Sica

# CULT

No.11

# HERO

VIDEOS BY TONY JACOBSEN

**I** f you closed your eyes, Canto dei Pini, an Italian film from 1946, you may notice a tiny road garter perched high in the left hand corner of the screen. Around 80 years ago, that style was how to a vast and crew fed Vittorio De Sica, one of key friends, a now-well-known director of a bicycle. Through the decades, it's who made the rough lives of the people more with something appropriate image and in the process honored his debt to a people created by defeat, economic hardship.

And just what unflinching portrait human misery was no film on earth like Sophia Loren running around in her skin in front of a confused student girl while Marcella Mastroianni lingers in background until he can get her and a hat's a hat. The film was the pathos-filled *Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow* (1946) and in De Sica's growing band of detractors — further proof that a career is over — had lost his way. Today the one of De Sica's most stylishly interesting works, but same and part pastiche at 80s cinema. Likewise, and a reminder that there's more to the silver fox movie than metaphorical dervish-quests.

De Sica was already in his mites but had lost none of the energy and airy charm that had helped make him a matinee idol — the Italian Maurice Chevalier — nearly 20 years earlier. Had not introduced, he may even have been content to continue the string of

decades of unchallenging but popular romances, where stories and light comedies he made his own in fascist era Italy.

In dangerous twist for an amit, he was noble politician whose relationship with a mistress was corrupt. His movie star persona lent a useful normality to a regeneration on suffocating the national ones, but he was healthily out of reach for political purposes, perhaps having taken the offer to run the fascist think tank in Venice and dodging Joseph Goebbels' advancing inscriptions. As an actor he always made a career from capturing good-angled characters like Master Alex (1937) the kindly paternal policeman of *Three Days and a Night* (1942); but De Sica's own ached roundness behind the screen, he famously demonstrated when wanted cypresses on the seven-year-old *Shoeshine* before finally succumbing to death before the entire crew of *The Bicycle*. It was a move Hitchcock would have been proud of and the child a heartful well ahead of the likes of *La Strada* moments.

That film was one of a trio of works between 1945 and 1952 that marked a new kind of cinema to the world: an intense pool idea of good, threat of destruction, of childhood friendship, against adult world (*Umberto D.* 1948 — opposite an old man and his outdog getting sold by a man (*Umberto D.* 1952) it was also far more optimistic of the three.

Later work failed to understand what this film's narration was just an accurate conversational language for moral use as reflected the harsh reality of surreal or post-war Italy. De Sica never sought a collection of rules to follow nor a manifesto of light and framing

use narrative. *Umberto D.* was also part of portraying the trials of human friendships. To have used the same methods in the boozing, truculent escapade *960s* would have been disastrous. More, it would have meant De Sica denying his most artful love comedies.

He produced a batch of easily enjoyable entertainment — including *Divorce '70* (1962) and *Mariage à la Mode* (1964) — but were the direct descendants of the Mastroianni mode De Sica learned in the 1930s-1940s — and the Italian public flocked to them. His director's work with the Italian *Ugo Henrich* (Alberto Sordi) in *La Roncina* (a stamp in a grand period *Repubblica*) became one of the most charming European films of the decade. But De Sica left within the narrow expectations of Italian cinema, the moment his helped create.

His films, both as director and actor were based on sentimental, off or amoral love. In the case of *sub-Catty On Imposters* (1946) or *Angeli Belli* (1948) or *The Battle of Australia* (1952), the country may have had a point. But most of De Sica's output is worth returning to at least a few of the great Italian novels: *The Garden of the Finzi-Contini* (1970).

In the end, the critics were out and De Sica is rarely included along with Vittorio Mussolini and Fellini when the late 40s evolution in Italian cinema is talked about. De Sica later admitted that he had become

more interested in the politics of the 1950s, all of his own movies on *Glielmo D.* (1963), *Umberto D.* (1969) and *La Roncina* (1970) — the former affected by critics if it did not seem like *960s*. In view of his last interview before his death in 1984, "I trust my conscience and my sensibility."

# GRASS ROOTS

## TURNING THE SPOTLIGHT ON THE UK'S LOW-BUDGET FILMMAKERS

INTERVIEW BY JONATHAN LEE

**A**fter churning out a series of failed scripts in 2006, swing-dancing computer programmer-turned-director Bryan O'Neil finally wrote *Booked Out*. The film he wanted to make – had to make. With a mathematics degree helping him navigate the network of national heating schemers, O'Neil enlisted friends, family and even Sylvie Simon OBE to help take his quirky indie comedy off the page and onto the streets of London. O'Neil is now set to complete the final edit, take his film on the road and, ideally, be done with his day job.

**LWLies** Who are you and why are you making a film?

**O'NEIL** I'm from Glasgow originally and work full-time as a computer programmer, but I took a sabbatical to make the film. My passion's always been film and music and one day I thought, 'Why not start writing?' I wanted to follow a career that I'd love doing, rather than just a day job I wrote *Booked Out* and as soon as I finished it, I just knew that I had to go on and make it into a film. There wasn't any other option. I'd finally written something that I felt was actually worthwhile.

**LWLies** What's your pitch?

**O'NEIL** Basically *Booked Out* is a quirky indie comedy. It's based around an artist called Alloch who lives in a block of flats, and are the interactions between her and the people around her. The characters in the film are not entirely 100 per cent comfortable with themselves, but they find solace and friendship with each other. It's about taking those little intricacies of modern life and relationships and exploring them.

**LWLies** What kind of experience do you have?

**O'NEIL** Err... none. My idea was that I think I've always watched lots of film and eventually I want to be a filmmaker full-time and not have a day job. Although I don't have film experience, I've got a mathematics degree. I guess I have the organisation and financing skills that you need for all the tax-type stuff, which is not the exciting part, but can make or break someone getting there.

**LWLies** Who will make your film stand out from the crowd?

**O'NEIL** I'm not sure if I'm daunted or not, but I think it's a slightly different type of film that I've not really seen in Britain before. I've seen examples in Europe and America,

but I can't think of a British comedy that's like it. There are similar films, but not in a British setting, with a British mentality.

**LWLies** Where are you in the process?

**O'NEIL** We've probably got 85 per cent through the edit and we've got some simple scenes on film. We'd like to get it into Sundance – it just depends if we can finish it in time for the deadline. The biggest constraint is that I have to work again, which is the most frustrating thing at the moment.

**LWLies** Tell us about the highs.

**O'NEIL** We got Sylvie Simon on board and that was sort of a real coup for us. When we heard back that she'd read the script and loved it and wanted to be involved, it just gave the whole project a bit more kudos. One of the other highs was when I'd seen the first assembly of the film. During the shoot I was happy with all the scenes, but you're never really sure of what it's like when it's all put together. It really came across that we'd made a proper film.

**LWLies** And the lows?

**O'NEIL** That's a real low, obviously. I tried to enter the film in September 2009. I had time off work booked and was really planning to go for it and basically I ran out of time. So there was that point of thinking, 'Is this actually going to happen?'

**LWLies** What advice would you pass on to anybody following in your footsteps?

**O'NEIL** If you're going to make a film, make sure it's about something that you're really passionate about. But you're willing to spend two or three years of your life on it. But the main thing is if you really want to do it, then you should just go out there and start doing it tomorrow. Or today.



# ABANDON NORMAL DEVICES



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in which  
we take  
futures  
buses  
and  
travellers  
roam





## LET ME IN

**DIRECTED BY** Matt Reeves **ETA** Winter 2010

**Footage** The remake of *Let the Right One In* is now two-unders, and we can't deny they look good, despite our reservations that a movie this gory should be rendered in 3D. At least Christopher Meloni appears to have done a decent job.

## THIS MUST BE THE PLACE

**DIRECTED BY** Paolo Sorrentino **ETA** 2011

**News** Filming has begun on the *Il Divo* director's first English-language film, which tells the story of a bond collector (Steve Buscemi) who attempts to find the New York criminal (Harry Dean Stanton) who killed his father. If you couldn't guess from the title, Dyed Byre of  *Talking Heads* provides the score.

## TOTAL RECALL

**DIRECTED BY** Len Wiseman **ETA** 2011

**Guaranteed** They just won't leave the themes alone, will they? *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* director Len Wiseman is said to be in line to take on the remake of Paul Verhoeven's 1990 sci-fi flick. *Star* screenwriter Kim Newman is also on board. What are the odds on Sam Worthington playing the lead?

## STONE

**DIRECTED BY** John Glaser **ETA** November 2010

**Footage** Playing Robert De Niro and Ed Norton sounds like a recipe for high-octane drama, but the trailer for this poison flick looks melancholy, to say the least. We can only hope the finished product is a bit more fiery. At least it can't be as lackluster as their previous pairing in *The Score*, can it?

## THE MASTER

**DIRECTED BY** Paul Thomas Anderson **ETA** 2011

**News** Despite some funding issues, *PTA's* follow-up to *There Will Be Blood* finally began shooting during the summer. Philip Seymour Hoffman plays a 1950s-era cult leader allegedly based on Scientology founder L. Ron Hubbard. There will be controversy.

## THE AVENGERS

**DIRECTED BY** Joss Whedon **ETA** Summer 2012

**Guaranteed** The comic-book movie to end all comic-book movies? Marvel unveiled its full *Avengers* line-up at this year's Comic-Con festival. Joining Robert Downey Jr.'s Iron Man and Chris Evans' Captain America are Jeremy Renner as Hawkeye and a new Hulk in the shape of Mark Ruffalo. Maybe the 12-year-old are excited but do grown-ups really still care about this stuff anymore?

## THE TEMPEST

**DIRECTED BY** Julie Taymor **ETA** December 2010

**News** Helen Mirren is set to storm awards season with her starring role as Prospero (renamed Prosper) in Julie Taymor's multi-dimensional Shakespeare adaptation. Ben Whishaw costars as Ariel with Dawson Hines as Caliban, while Russell Brand takes a rare arthouse role as porter Trinculo.

## MELANCHOLIA

**DIRECTED BY** Lars von Trier **ETA** Spring 2011

**News** Lars von Trier's apocalyptic drama has begun filming, with Keirnsey Stefenson and Kristen Bell serving alongside Charlotte Gainsbourg, John Hurt and Charlotte Rampling. The melancholic director describes it as "a psychological disaster movie." Just like all his other films, there.

## RARE EXPORTS

**DIRECTED BY** Julian Schnabel **ETA** Christmas 2010

**News** While the American studios usually gift us with Christmas movies starring Vince Vaughn, there's something else to look forward to this December. Namely that intriguing offering from cult French director Julian Schnabel. This fantasy thriller is based on Melville's popular novella, *Moby-Dick*, and should offer an unusual treat to the festive period.



## TRON: LEGACY

DIRECTED BY Joseph Kosinski R-R Certificate 2010

**Footage** *We've seen eight minutes of *Revenge**  
From Disney's *Chronicles* offering and it's absolutely killer, with Daft Punk统领 the score. *Revenge* is to come in December.



## A SAD TRUMPET BALLAD

**News** *REVIEW* *Alain de la Iglesia* R-R 2011

The Spanish director's latest is meant to be a romcom to frown after the disappointing *Urgencias*. Set across four decades, the tale has a story of two women who fall in love with the same trumpet soloist during the Franco regime.

## MIRAL

DIRECTED BY Julian Schnabel R-R November 2011

**Footage** *Orlando Bloom and Penélope Cruz* seem to be a dream team, even if it does mean political compromise. Our own Penélope Cruz plays a Palestinian insider who falls in love with a political activist in 1980s Israel. Penélope acquits herself well in the trailer, now online.

## NORWEGIAN WOOD

DIRECTED BY Iain软Ach Hung R-R July 2011

**Footage** *Haruki Murakami's* beloved coming-of-age novel quickly found its way online recently, but gives little away about what to expect. Audiences at the Venice Film Festival will be able to find out more in September.

## MONSTERS

DIRECTED BY Gareth Edwards R-R Winter 2011

**Footage** *But* director Gareth Edwards' losing Oscar short at presented at Cannes in the spring, its trailer, now online, is one of the best we've seen in a while, churning atmosphere and scares without giving too much away. Due to look forward to.

## ON THE ROAD

DIRECTED BY Walter Salles R-R 2011

**News** *Fionn* has begun on the adaptation of Jack Kerouac's legendary Beat novel, with our very own Sam Riley as Sal Paradise, and *TRON: Legacy*'s on-the-up star Garrett Hedlund as Dean Moriarty. Keisha Castle and Kristen Dunst round out the cast.

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